PG7158
.S4
Z313
1898x

·Ex Libris
Duquesne University:

Gift of

Miss Emma Smith

PEASANTS IN EXILE

(FOR DAILY BREAD.)

FROM THE POLISH OF HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ
BY C. O'CONOR-ECCLES.

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA:
THE AVE MARIA.

S5764pe

FICTION

PG7158
.S4
Z313
1898A

COPYRIGHTED, 1898,
BY D. E. HUDSON, C. S. C.

Fiction
Sienkiewicz, H
S4
1898

PEASANTS IN EXILE.

FEB 19 1942
41032

PEASANTS IN EXILE.

PART I.

I.

THE VOYAGE.

THE German emigrant vessel *Blucher* labored heavily through the Atlantic on her way from Hamburg to New York. She had already been four days on her voyage, and it was now forty-eight hours since she had passed the green shores of Ireland and gained the open sea.

From the deck nothing was visible as far as the eye could reach save grey-green water, furrowed like a ploughed field, heaving sullenly, foaming here and there, and melting gradually into the mist as it reached

the distant, hazy horizon. A shimmer from the clouds lay on the water.

Against the pearly background the dark hull of the vessel stood out clearly,—rising as with an effort, sinking as if exhausted; now disappearing from sight, now rising on the crest of a wave; but moving steadily onward the while. The waves at times seemed rushing to meet it, again it rushed to meet them, and cut through them with its prow. Behind it, like a giant snake, curled a track of foam. A flock of gulls circled overhead, turned somersaults in the air, and shrieked fiercely.

The wind was favorable. The ship was steaming at half-speed, with expanded sails. The atmosphere was clearing. Here and there, through rifts in the clouds, a bit of blue sky peeped out, its shape perpetually changing.

Since the *Blucher* had left Hamburg the weather had been gusty, though not stormy.

The wind blew toward the west, ceasing at intervals till the sails flapped loose, only to round themselves again as they caught the breeze. The sailors, in their close-fitting guernseys, shouted in chorus as they drew the rope of the lower yard to the foremast, bending in time to their song. With their voices mingled the shrill whistle of the escaping steam, and the snorting breath of the funnels, which at intervals belched forth thick, black columns or mighty rings of smoke.

The passengers crowded on deck to enjoy the fine weather. To starboard might be seen the dark hats and warm mantles of those travelling first-class; while forward, in groups of more vivid and varied coloring, were massed the steerage passengers. Men sat on the benches and smoked short pipes; others had lain down; while more leaned against the bulwarks and looked at the waves. Some women, too, were

amongst them, holding children by the hand, and having tin mugs fastened to their belts. Several young fellows paced up and down, keeping their equilibrium with difficulty, and staggering as the vessel pitched. Meanwhile they sang "*Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?*" and probably thought that they would never see that fatherland again,—despite which they were cheerful.

Amongst all these people two were the saddest—an elderly man and young girl, who kept a little apart from the others. Neither of them understood German, and they were indeed desolate amongst strangers. What were they? Any one could tell at a glance—Polish peasants. The man was Lorenz Toporek, and the girl, his daughter, Marysia. They were on their way to America, and today for the first time they had ventured on deck. Anxiety and astonishment were depicted on their pale faces. They threw frightened glances

at their fellow travellers, at the sailors, the great ship with its puffing chimneys, and the threatening waves that dashed their spray against the bulwarks. They scarcely ventured to speak even to each other. Lorenz supported himself by one hand against the rail, while with the other he held fast to his four-cornered cap, that the wind might not carry it away. Marysia clung to her father, and as the ship lurched drew closer to him with a little suppressed cry of alarm.

After a time the old man broke the silence.

"Marysia," he whispered.

"Well, father?"

"Do you see it?"

"Yes, I see it."

"And does it astonish you?"

"Yes."

The more astonished she was, however, the more frightened she became; and so

with her father. Fortunately the waves grew calmer, the wind fell, and the sun peered through the clouds. When they saw the sunshine, their hearts grew lighter; for they thought that this same sun was shining at home in Lipinska. Strange and wonderful as everything was here, this ray of spring sunlight seemed like an old friend and protector.

Gradually the sea became calm as a mirror; the sails flapped idly; the captain's whistle sounded from the bridge, and the sailors began to reef the canvas. The sight of these men hanging in mid-air renewed the astonishment of Toporek and Marysia.

"Our lads couldn't do that," said the old man.

"Whatever Germans can do, Yasko could do," replied Marysia.

"What Yasko?—from Sobeks?"

"Oh, dear, no! I mean Yasko Smolak, the groom."

"How smart he is, to be sure! But you must put him out of your head, my dear. You don't suit him, and he doesn't suit you. You will yet ride in your carriage like a lady, but he will never be anything but what he is."

"He has a little farm."

"So he has, but where? In Lipinska."

Marysia did not reply. She thought to herself, "One can't escape one's destiny"; and sighed regretfully.

Meantime the sails were reefed, and in their stead worked the screw, churning the water with such force that the ship trembled. The rolling, however, ceased almost entirely. Farther off, the water was smooth and as blue as the sky. New faces appeared constantly on deck—workmen, German peasants, loafers from different seaport towns who were going to America, not to look for work but to live by their wits. As the crowd became greater every

minute, the two Poles sat on a coil of rope in a corner, so as to be out of the way.

"Daddy, will the journey across the water last much longer?" asked Marysia.

"How can I tell you, dear? Even if you were to ask, there is nobody here to answer you in Polish."

"But how shall we speak in America?"

"Didn't they tell us that there were numbers of our own people over there?"

"Daddy."

"What is it?"

"What good are all these wonderful things to us? We were far better off in Lipinska."

"How dare you talk like that, Marysia! It is wicked." After a pause, however, he added, as if speaking to himself: "It was the will of God."

The young girl's eyes filled with tears; both father and daughter thought of home.

II.

THE LAWSUIT.

And now for the reason why the old man was going to America, and how it had come about. Half a year previously his cow was found trespassing in a field of clover. His landlord, who seized it, demanded three roubles compensation. Lorenz objected; they went to law about it, and the lawsuit became interminable. The aggrieved landlord now exacted pay not only for the injury done by the cow to his clover, but for the maintenance ever since, and the sum increased daily. Lorenz could not make up his mind to part with his hard-earned money. The costs of the lawsuit did not amount to much in the beginning, but it ran on for a long time, and they naturally grew in proportion. In the end Lorenz lost.

For the cow he had already paid the Lord knows how much. As he had no other property worth mentioning, his horse was distrained, while he himself was condemned to prison for his obstinacy.

Toporek was in an agony when he heard the decision; for harvest time was drawing near, and hands as well as a team were necessary for the work. As might be expected, he was late in saving his crop. It rained in torrents all the time, and the corn rotted on the stalk. He was constantly revolving in his mind how it had come to pass that through one involuntary injury done to the clover he had lost all his possessions—so much cash, a part of his little farm, and the crops of the entire year. He speedily foresaw that in the spring he and his daughter must either beg or starve. Thus it happened that the man who until then had had a modest competence, and had always conducted

himself respectably, fell into despair and took to drink.

At the public-house he made the acquaintance of a German whose ostensible business in the village was to buy flax, but who was in reality an emigration agent who enticed the people across the sea. To Lorenz he related wonder after wonder about America. He promised him more land for nothing than the whole of Lipinska — beautiful land with woods and meadows,—until the peasant's eyes sparkled. Sometimes he believed the German, sometimes he did not; but the Jewish milkman confirmed every word, and asserted that the Government out there gave everyone as much land as he liked to have. This the Jew had heard from his own brother's son. The German had money to show, too,—more money than any peasant, or indeed any gentleman, had seen in Lipinska in all his life;

and so they dangled the bait till they caught the fish.

"Why should I stay here any longer?" asked Lorenz of himself. "Why should I let myself go to destruction? I have lost by a trespass enough money to keep a servant. What is left to me? Am I going to take my stick in my hand and sing through the streets, or beg at the church door? No, no!" he thought; and bound himself to the German by shaking hands on the bargain, sold his plot of ground to his neighbor Michaelis, and started with his daughter for America.

The journey was not as pleasant as he had anticipated. At Hamburg he was forced to spend a great deal of his money. On board, Marysia and he had to sit in the common third-class cabin. The constant rolling of the ship and the immensity of the ocean terrified them. They could not make themselves understood by any one;

Lorenz was shoved and pulled hither and thither like an article of furniture, and their German fellow-travellers got the best of everything.

At midday, when everyone crowded around, vessel in hand, while the cook distributed food, Lorenz and his daughter were pushed aside till the last, so that they were often faint from hunger. It went hard with them, so strange and so lonely did they feel, without a friend save God above. Lorenz, however, pulled himself together before Marysia. He betrayed no anxiety in his manner; but stuck his cap on one side, and bade her look at this, that, and the other, expressing astonishment at all he saw; but in his heart he was ill at ease. Now and again dark forebodings seized upon him. It was all so new and strange to him! Had he done well to come? Perhaps those "heathens," as he called his conductors, might throw Marysia

and himself into the water, or force them to change their religion, or compel them to sign some paper or other—possibly a compact with the devil! Even the ship—which day and night struggled over the illimitable sea, always trembling and shrieking and foaming and spitting fire like a dragon, and in the darkness trailing sparks behind it,—appeared to the countryman's eyes as some sort of a strange, accursed monster. A childish fear laid hold of him; for this Polish peasant, now he had quitted scenes familiar to him, was as helpless as a child in the wide, wide world.

He could not rightly place in his mind the things that he saw around or before him. What wonder, then, that he bowed his head beneath his heavy load of care and of ignorance, as he sat there on the coil of rope? The ocean always whispered in his ears the one word, "Lipinska." He heard it pipe in the steam-whistle; the sun

seemed to say, "How are you getting on, Lorenz? I too was in Lipinska." But the screw worked the harder; and the funnels puffed and groaned the louder, as if they were two evil spirits dragging him farther and farther from his native land.

Meantime Marysia followed quite another train of thought. Her recollections were different. She remembered that evening late in harvest, not long before their departure, when she fetched water from the village well. The first stars shone out in the sky, as she raised and lowered the windlass. True, she sang in time to the motion, but her heart was as sad as the swallow's when it twitters a melancholy farewell ere it departs for other climes. All at once she heard from the dim and dusky forest a long-drawn whistle. Yasko Smolak was signalling to her that he saw her by the well, and that he would come to her immediately through the dewy aftermath.

Hardly had the whistle sounded ere he had gained her side. He sprang from his horse, shook his flaxen head, and—what he said still rang in her ears. She closed her eyes, for she felt as if Yasko still whispered to her with trembling voice:

"If your father insists on it, I will give back my wages to the master, sell my cottage and the land, and emigrate too; for where you go, my own Marysia, I will follow, like a stork through the air, or a wild duck through the water, or a ring that rolls down a hill, till I find you, my only treasure! What would my life be without you? Where you are, there too will I be. Whatever becomes of you, will become of me. We are one in life and in death. I now swear at this well to be true to you. May God forsake me if ever I forsake you, my own Marysia!"

As she thought of these words she saw that well before her, and the harvest-moon

as it rose behind the wood in a flood of light, and of Yasko living and loving at her side. From these thoughts she drew comfort; for Yasko was honest and trustworthy, and would certainly keep his promise. If he only sat beside her now, and listened with her to the roaring of the ocean, she felt she could be happy; for he was afraid of nothing, and always knew the right thing to do. She wondered how he was now occupied in Lipinska, where all was covered deep in snow. Was he riding, axe in hand, to the forest; or was he harnessing the horses; or had he been sent somewhere with the sledges; or was he breaking ice at the pond? What was her best-beloved doing?

But where was *she* now? Whither had obedience to her father led her? Before her was water,—nothing but water as far as the eye could see; nothing but green ridges and foaming waves; and on this vast watery plain only this one ship, like a lost bird.

Nothing but sky above; nothing but a waste of waters below, with swelling waves and melancholy howling winds. Even from the mainmast no land to be seen, as if the waters extended to the end of the world. Poor Yasko! will you ever meet her again, though you fly through the air like a falcon, or swim through the ocean like a fish? Do you, far away, still think of her?

Slowly the sun sank toward the west, and mirrored itself on the wrinkled water like a path of light. Now the reflection seemed like golden scales, now it shifted and broke; now it gleamed, now flashed, now flamed, till it lost itself somehow in the distance. The ship moved along this dazzling highway, as if it followed the setting sun. The smoke that streamed from the funnels was reddened, the sails and the ropes tinted with rose. The sailors sang merrily, while the fiery ball grew larger and sank deeper in the west. Soon but

half of it was visible, then its rays alone, and at last the whole horizon glowed like a furnace. In all this splendor it was impossible to tell where the waters ended and the sky began, so filled were sky and waters with light, gradually growing fainter. Then all at once arose a breeze, as if the ocean murmured its evening prayer.

At such moments the soul of man feels an unseen power. Old memories awake; what it loves, it loves the more; what it longs for, its thoughts fly to. Even Lorenz and Marysia felt happier that those they loved were not where the wind was driving them like withered leaves, but in Poland. How blessed by God was that dear land, with its waving cornfields, thick forests, and homely thatched cottages; with its green fields, amidst which the yellow ducklings peeped; where the storks and swallows circled; where were far-reaching, crisping waters, wayside Calvaries, and white farm-houses

under shady lime trees; that land where every wayfarer pulls off his cap with the beautiful salutation, "Praised be Jesus Christ!" to hear the response, "To all eternity. Amen." That land was their own beloved country, prized above everything in the world. If their peasant hearts had never felt this before, they now felt it all the more keenly.

Lorenz bared his head; a lingering gleam from the west shone on his silvering hair, he was full of thoughts, yet knew not how to express them. At last he said:

"Marysia, I feel as if we had left something behind us."

"So we have, father — happiness and love," murmured the girl softly, and raised her eyes as if she uttered a prayer.

III.

THE STORM.

Meantime it had grown dark, and the travellers left the deck; but unusual excitement reigned on board. So beautiful a sunset is seldom succeeded by a calm night; therefore the captain's whistle sounded almost unceasingly; and the sailors moved hither and thither, tugging at the ropes and making all taut. The last gleam of crimson was quenched in the sky, and a thick fog arose on the water. The stars glimmered and disappeared. The fog became visibly thicker, and veiled the sky, the horizon, and the ship. Only the funnels and the towering mainmast could be seen. An hour later all was wrapped in a dense white cloud. Even the lantern at the top of the mast and

the train of sparks from the funnel were invisible. The ship hardly moved. It seemed as though the sea were wearied and oppressed by the burthen of the fog.

The night so far had been calm. Suddenly a curious murmur was heard in the stillness. It seemed to come from the farthest point of the horizon, like a heavy sigh from the bosom of an approaching giant. Now it sounded as if a voice called out of the darkness, again as if a chorus of inexpressibly mournful cries resounded in the distance. They all echoed, as it were, out of the depths of infinite space. The sailors believed this betokened a tempest: that the voices of the storm summoned demons from hell. That the tempest would come, every moment showed clearly. The captain, clad in waterproof, stood on the upper bridge. An officer took his accustomed stand before the illuminated compass. None of the passengers appeared on deck.

Lorenz and Marysia had entered the third-class cabin. Here deep stillness reigned. The lamps suspended from the low ceiling cast but a feeble light on the dark interior, and the groups of emigrants cowering close to the sides near their berths. The cabin was large but gloomy, as the steerage generally is. It almost touched the frame planks of the ship. The sleeping places at the farthest end, divided by wooden partitions, resembled so many dark holes; and the entire cabin gave one the impression of a great cellar. The atmosphere was compounded of various smells—tarred sail-cloth, pitch, ropes, and damp.

What similarity was there between this apartment and the elegantly furnished first-class saloon? A voyage in this hole, though lasting but a fortnight, poisons the lungs with impure air, pales the complexion, and not unfrequently brings on scurvy. Lorenz and Marysia were only

four days afloat, and yet no one would have recognized the fresh, rosy-cheeked maiden of Lipinska in this pallid girl weakened by illness. Lorenz, too, had grown as yellow as wax; for they had not gone on deck at all at first, thinking it was not allowed. How should they know what was allowed and what was not? They did not venture to move from the one spot, nor to leave their baggage.

At present, however, not only they but everyone else sat by their belongings. The whole cabin was filled with similar bundles of emigrants' gear, which added yet more to its ugliness and disorder. Bedding, articles of clothing, food, different utensils, tin vessels, etc., lay confusedly mingled, and, in larger or smaller heaps, covered the whole floor. Upon them sat the emigrants, almost exclusively Germans. Some chewed tobacco, others smoked, the smoke ascending to the low ceiling, and there forming

thick clouds, dimmed still more the lamp light. Some children cried in a corner. Tonight the usual murmur of gossip was stilled; the fog had filled everyone with anxiety and uneasiness. The more experienced travellers knew that a storm was coming on; hence all were aware that a great danger, perhaps even death itself, threatened them.

Only Lorenz and Marysia had as yet remarked nothing, although one could hear those ominous aerial voices every time the door opened. Both sat in the background, at the smallest end of the cabin, near the ship's bow. It rocked most there, and consequently they had been crowded in by their fellow-passengers. The old man was refreshing himself with a piece of bread brought from Lipinska; and Marysia, to whom idleness was distasteful, was plaiting her long hair for the night. At last, however, she began to wonder at the general

silence, broken only by the cry of children, and asked:

"Why are the Germans so quiet this evening, I wonder?"

"I do not know, dear," replied Lorenz. "It may be one of their holidays, or—"

Suddenly the ship lurched as if she had received a blow, and trembled as if something terrible stood before her. The tin vessels around them clattered noisily; the flame of the lamp flickered and brightened; several voices cried in terror: "What is it? What is it?" But no answer came; although a second plunge, still greater than the first, threw the *Blucher* over on her side. She righted herself slowly, now rose, now sank, the waves striking sullenly against the port-holes on one side.

"It's the beginning of a storm, I think," whispered Marysia.

Meanwhile the gathering tempest murmured round the ship like the wind in a

forest, and, gaining force, howled like a pack of wolves. One blast after another threw the ship on her side, encircled her, raised her on high, and dashed her again into the depths. Every joist cracked. Kitchen utensils, luggage, beds and furniture flew here and there—out of one corner into another. Many of the passengers fell to the ground. Feathers from the pillows danced in the air, and the chimneys of the lamps clinked audibly. Louder and louder grew the tumult and the roar; the rush of waters streaming over the deck, the creaking of planks, the crying of women and children, the struggle to recover lost property. Amidst all this confusion one heard every now and then the shrill piping of the officer's whistle, and the dull tramping of the sailors' feet, as they hurried to and fro on deck

"O Our Lady of Czestochowa, aid us!" implored Marysia.

The bow of the ship in which father and daughter were cowering, now rose, and now plunged like a mad creature into the depths; so that, although they held on the edge of the berth, they were dashed against the sides with every motion of the vessel. The waves grew more angry, and the cabin floor creaked, so that it seemed at every moment as if the planks must be wrenched asunder.

"Hold on, Marysia!" cried Lorenz, as loudly as he could, to be heard above the storm; but terror rendered him dumb like the others. Even the children ceased to cry, the women to lament; everyone drew quick breaths, every hand held fast to fixtures within reach. And all the while the rage of the storm increased, as if the elements were unchained. Mist and darkness, water and clouds, wind and sea-foam, were all commingled. The waves struck the ship like cannon-balls, dashing her at one mo-

ment to the right, at the next to the left; now lifting her on high, now burying her in the trough of the sea. Over her dashed the spume, and great masses of water swept the deck with continuous uproar. The oil lamps in the cabin were well-nigh extinguished. It grew darker and darker, as if death were approaching.

"Marysia," began the old man in a feeble voice, for he was almost breathless,—"Marysia, I brought all this on you. Forgive me."

The girl pressed his hand silently.

"Our last hour has come," he went on. "Our sinful eyes will never again open on the world. We shall die without confession, without Extreme Unction. We shall not rest in the earth,—alas for us! we shall go from a watery grave to the judgment-seat."

Marysia understood only too well that there was no further hope. A thousand

thoughts flashed through her brain, and her soul cried: "Yasko, my own Yasko, do you hear me in Lipinska?" Terror pressed so heavily upon her heart that she burst into a sudden uncontrollable sob, that echoed fearfully through the cabin, where all was silent as death. A single voice cried, "Hush!" but ceased immediately, as if the sound terrified the speaker.

In the interval the chimneys of the lamps had fallen, the lights were extinguished, and complete darkness reigned. The frightened people crowded together to be near one another. Suddenly, amidst the anxiety and stillness, broke the voice of Lorenz:

"*Kyrie eleison*," he sang.

"*Christe eleison*," replied the sobbing Marysia.

"*Pater de cœlis Deus*,—God the Father of Heaven, God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us!" prayed both.

In the blackness of the cabin the voices sounded solemn and inspired, broken as they were at intervals by the girl's sobs. Many of the emigrants covered their faces. Marysia gradually ceased weeping; the voices grew calmer and clearer, accompanied by the howling of the storm without, when a sudden cry broke from those nearest the door. A great wave had burst it in, and flooded the cabin to its farthest corner. The women clambered onto the berths to save themselves. To all it seemed that the end was near. Presently one of the ship's officers entered, a lantern in his hand, his clothes wet through, his face red-brown. In a few words he quieted the women. The water had only got in by accident; and although the sea still ran high, there was no immediate danger.

Time passed. The storm raged with increasing violence; the ship creaked, rocked, and lay over on her side, but she did not go

down. The people became somewhat less alarmed; a few even composed themselves to sleep. The hours went on. At last a gleam of light made its way into the cabin through the window above. Day had dawned upon the ocean. Sad and gloomy enough it was, yet with it came hope and courage.

When they had murmured all the prayers they knew by heart, Lorenz and Marysia crept to their berths, and soon sank into a deep sleep. They awoke only when the breakfast bell rang; but they could eat nothing: their heads were as heavy as lead. The old man's spirits, however, were the lower; his head felt as if it would burst; it seemed to him as if he should never be well again.

The German who had enticed him over to America had, no doubt, told him that he must cross the water, but he never imagined the water was so vast, and that the

journey would take so long. He fancied he could get over in a ferry, as he had often forded lakes and rivers at home. Had he known what the ocean was like, he would have remained quietly in Lipinska.

Moreover, a fear tormented him, that he had delivered over his own soul and his daughter's to destruction. Was it not a sin and a shame for a good Catholic from Lipinska to tempt God by venturing on this great water, over which they had now been making their way for five days without reaching the other side—if indeed there were another side? And seven additional days of the same doubts and terrors were still to be gone through.

For forty-eight hours more the storm lasted, and then for the first time the weather cleared somewhat. Our two friends ventured on deck; but as they saw the same raging ocean before them, the mountainous waves pressing onward toward the ship, and

looked into the ever-shifting, bottomless depths beneath them, they felt again that only the hand of God could save them from the abyss.

IV.

IN SIGHT OF LAND.

At last it quite cleared up. But day after day passed, and still nothing could be seen but this never-ending waste of waters, now green, now bluish, with which the heavens seemed to mingle. At times there sailed high above small bright clouds, that glowed in the evening light and went to sleep in the west, while the ship seemed to hasten restlessly after them across the ocean. In his heart Lorenz believed that the sea had no end, but he took courage and resolved to ask. So one day he took off his four-cornered cap, and, bowing humbly to a passing sailor, said in Polish:

"Please, your honor, is the voyage nearly over?"

Wonder of wonders! the sailor did not

burst out laughing in his face, but stopped and listened to him. His weather-beaten countenance betrayed that memory was at work, and recollections quickened within him that he could not at once put into words. After a moment the sailor said:

"What?"

"I asked if we should soon land, your honor."

"Two days more, two days," replied the seaman, with difficulty, at the same time holding up two fingers.

"I humbly thank you, sir."

"Where are you from?"

"From Lipinska."

"Where is Lipinska?"

Marysia, who was standing by during the conversation, colored, but raised her eyes modestly to the sailor's, and said in a low voice, and with a somewhat rustic air:

"We come from near Posen, sir."

The sailor looked meditatively at the

sea-gulls that circled around the ship, and then at the girl, with her braids of flaxen hair; and something approaching sympathy might be read in his face. After a pause he said, earnestly:

"I was in Dantzig—understand Polish—your countryman—but that was a long time ago; I am German now."

With these words he raised the rope's end that he held in his hand, and, turning round, called out, "Yeo ho!" in sailor fashion, and drew the rope toward him.

Thenceforward he always had a friendly nod and smile for Marysia when he saw her on deck. She and her father were delighted; there was at least one creature on this strange ship with whom they had something in common. Moreover, the journey could not now last much longer.

Early one morning as the young girl came on deck an unlooked-for sight met her eyes. Afar off she saw something dancing on the

waters; as the ship drew nearer she perceived that it was a great red buoy, that rose and fell gently with the heaving of the ocean. Farther on she saw a second, a third, a fourth. Sea and sky were both a little cloudy, but at the same time mild and silvery. The water was as smooth as glass, and on its surface more buoys were to be distinguished. Flocks of gulls followed the vessel, with shrill piping and screaming. There was unusual bustle on board. The sailors appeared in new jackets; some were swabbing and holy-stoning the deck, others polishing the brasses and the windows; the flag was run up to the mast-head; a second, larger, fluttered at the stern. Expectation and joy filled all hearts; every living creature appeared on deck. Many began to pack their things and cord them up. When Marysia remarked this, she said:

"We are certain to land soon."

She and Lorenz were in the best of spirits,

as in the west appeared before them the island of Sandy Hook; and another, smaller, with a large building erected upon it. Farther off something rose from the sea, misty and dimly outlined, growing gradually in length and density, as if fog or smoke or clouds were there concentrated. At the sight there was a great uproar. Everyone pointed in that direction, and the steam escaped with a shrill cry, as of pleasure.

"What is that?" asked Lorenz.

"New York," answered the friendly sailor, who stood beside him.

The cloud gradually dispersed; and in its place, the nearer the ship drew the more distinctly visible were the outlines of houses, roofs and tiles. Spires stood dark against the sky; and high above them towered huge factory chimneys, with still higher columns of smoke losing themselves in space. Beneath, in the harbor, lay a

forest of masts, decorated with thousands of flags, wherewith the sea-wind played as with flowers in a meadow. Nearer, still nearer, drew the ship to that city of marvels, that seemed, as it were, to rise from out the sea.

Great joy and astonishment moved the heart of old Lorenz. With uncovered head and open mouth he stared and stared, until at last he cried:

"Marysia, for goodness' sake, do you see it?"

"Yes, father, I see it."

"And are you amazed at it?"

"Yes."

"God be praised!" he cried. "If they give us a bit of land just like that, close to the town, and a slice of meadow, we'll be all the nearer to the market; and at fair time we can drive in our cows and pigs, and sell them. People are as plentiful here as blackberries. In Poland I was a peasant, here I shall be a gentleman."

At this moment the National Park unfolded itself to his gaze in all its beauty. Lorenz could make out the thickets and clumps of trees, and added:

"I'll bow down to the ground before the government commissioner—he'll be a very grand gentleman, you may be sure,—and I'll beg and pray of him to give me just two roods of that wood. It would be as good as an estate. Every morning I shall send the servant-man to town with firewood. Thank God, now I see the German did not deceive me!"

Marysia, too, smiled at the thought of meeting the kind commissioner. She did not know why or wherefore, but an old song came into her head, that in Lipinska was always sung by the bride to the bridegroom at weddings:

What sort of a wooer are you, sir?
What sort of a coat have you got?
Have you got a good cloak and a hat, sir,
And a chicken to put in the pot?

Perhaps before long she might sing that to Yasko, when he came over, and she was an heiress.

Meantime a little boat had put out from the quarantine station. Four or five persons climbed on deck and began speaking and shouting. Soon after another boat put out from the harbor, filled with agents from the different hotels and boarding-houses, with guides and money-changers. They all spoke at the top of their voices, pushing and shoving one another about. Lorenz and Marysia felt as if a mill-wheel were turning in their heads. With all this noise and confusion they knew not what to do.

The friendly sailor advised the old man to change his money, and promised to see that he was not cheated. Lorenz obeyed, and for all he possessed in the world received forty-seven silver dollars. Before this was over, the ship had come so near the city that one could see not only the houses,

but the men working at the docks. Small and large boats went by in a continual procession. At last the vessel reached the wharf in the inner harbor—the voyage was over!

V.

THE LANDING.

The passengers streamed across the narrow gangway like bees from a hive, beginning with the first-class, then the second. Finally came those of the steerage, laden with their baggage. As the old man and his daughter, after much knocking about, at last found themselves near the passage, they saw the sailor at their side. He shook Lorenz warmly by the hand and said:

"Good luck to you and the girl! God be with you!"

"God reward you!" cried both together; but there was no time for more. The crowd hurried them across the gangway, pressing them forward, until they found themselves within the walls of the Custom House. The Custom House officer, in a

grey overcoat with a silver star, looked through their baggage, then said, "All right!" and motioned them to the door. They went out and stood in the street, looking at each other.

"Daddy," asked Marysia, "what shall we do now?"

"We must wait here, of course. The German said a Government commissioner would come to look after us."

So they stood by the wall, waiting for the commissioner. Meanwhile there flowed around them the trade and traffic of a great city. Never in their lives had they seen anything like these straight, wide streets, crowded with people. In the centre rolled cabs, tramways and heavy wagons. On every side echoed a strange, unknown tongue, and voices of workmen and costermongers. Frequently they saw woolly-haired negroes go by, and at the sight of them they devoutly and tremulously made

the Sign of the Cross. This city was too astonishing, too noisy, with its whistling locomotives, its rattling conveyances, and its loud-voiced people, who all walked as quickly as if some one were pursuing them whom they sought to avoid. They swarmed like ants; and how strange all these faces looked!—some coal-black, some olive-colored, some fiery red. Just by the dock, where our travellers stood, the bustle was the greatest. Men were unloading one ship, and shifting its cargo to another; wagons constantly rolled by, wheelbarrows rattled on the gangways,—the din was deafening.

Two hours passed thus, almost unperceived; and still they stood by the wall and waited for the commissioner. No doubt they might have seemed a strange pair to American eyes, had any one cared to regard them—this Polish peasant, with his long greyish hair and his four-cornered

cap, edged with fur; and the maiden from Lipinska, in her red holiday attire, a string of coral round her neck. But people passed on, apparently without seeing them; for in New York nothing in face or attire attracts attention.

Another hour passed. The sky grew overcast, and showers of sleet fell at intervals; a cold, damp wind blew in from the sea—but still they waited for the commissioner. Peasants are patient; yet they felt it hard, and their hearts grew heavy. They had been lonely enough amongst strangers on board, and inexpressibly terrified at the wild waste of waters when, like lost children, they prayed God with all the fervor of their souls to lead them safe to land; for they thought that once on shore, all their troubles would be over. Now they had arrived in safety, and found themselves in the midst of a great city; yet amongst this vast crowd of people they

were far lonelier and more frightened than they had been on the ship.

Still the commissioner did not come. What were they to do if he never came,—if the German had deceived them? At the very thought their poor hearts throbbed painfully. What were they to do? Were they to die there in misery? And all the time the wind cut them like a knife, and the rain wet them to the skin.

"Marysia, aren't you cold?" asked the old man.

"Yes, father: I am very cold."

Another hour struck from the city steeples; twilight began to fall; the bustle at the docks diminished. The lamps were lit along the streets, and the whole harbor flamed with the reflection of the city's multitudinous lights. The workmen sang hoarse snatches of song as they made their way homeward in groups. By degrees the wharf grew empty; even the Custom House

was closed—but still father and daughter stood by the wall, and patiently waited for the commissioner.

At last night fell, and all was still around them, except that now and then they heard the puffing of a steamboat, and saw its train of sparks; or listened to a wave that rippled against the wharf, or a drunken sailor singing to himself as he made his way back to his ship. The light from the street lamps was blotted out by fog—but still they waited. Even had they wished otherwise, where were they to go, what were they to do,—where were they to lay their weary heads?

The cold grew sharper, and now they felt the pangs of hunger. If they had but a roof over their heads—for they were already drenched to the skin. Alas! the commissioner did not come. He never would come; for no such commissioners exist. The German was the agent of a

bogus company, took his percentage on every emigrant, and troubled himself about nothing further.

Lorenz felt his knees trembling under him, as if a heavy burden weighed him down; and yet he waited and endured as only a peasant can. Then the girl's voice made itself heard, though it trembled with cold.

"Daddy."

"Hold your tongue, child! God has no pity on us."

"Let us go back to Lipinska."

"I'd sooner jump into the water than do such a thing."

"God! my God!" whispered the girl, in horror.

Then Lorenz repented. He sighed: "My poor orphan child!—may God have pity at least on you!"

She did not hear him, however. She had leaned her head against the wall and

closed her eyes. Sleep overpowered her; and there she lay motionless, though she woke feverish and restless at intervals. In dreams Lipinska appeared to her like a picture in a frame; and she thought she heard Yasko singing,—

What sort of a maiden are you, dear?
What sort of a gown have you got?

. . . . . .

In New York harbor the first glimmer of dawn fell on the water, the masts, and the Custom House. The two figures that crouched against the wall were scarcely to be distinguished in the dim light. Their garments were covered with snow, and they lay motionless, as if frozen; their faces ashy and worn,—though Destiny had as yet but turned the first pages in the book of their sorrows.

PART II.

VI.

PEASANTS IN EXILE.

A stranger in New York, leaving spacious Broadway and making for the harbor in the direction of Chatham Square and its neighborhood, soon finds himself involved in a labyrinth of streets, that grow poorer, barer, and more desolate as he proceeds. The lanes and alleys become narrower and narrower. The houses, built for the most part by the Dutch settlers, are partly tumble-down, and have grown crooked and dangerous with years. Their roofs in more than one place have fallen in. The walls, bare of plaster, have sunk so deep in the ground that the cellar windows scarcely appear above the edge of the

pavement, and extraordinary deviations from the perpendicular replace the usual straight lines dear to the American heart. The bulging roofs and walls press close to one another, as if for mutual support.

This quarter lies close to the sea-shore. Consequently, the shallow puddles in the ill-paved streets are scarcely ever dry; and the little open spaces, thickly built round, seem like ponds of dark, stagnant water from one year's end to the other. The windows of the miserable houses look gloomily on this water, whose dirty surface is chequered by scraps of paper, card-board boxes, projecting fragments of glass and delf, wood and lead, mostly fallen from some ship's cargo. In this vicinity, entire streets—or, to be precise, the filth that covers them—are strewn with this refuse. Nothing but dirt, disorder, and human misery, is to be seen.

Hereabouts are numerous boarding-

houses, where food and a bed may be had for two dollars a week. Here, too, are many bar-rooms, public-houses, where all sorts of riffraff are enlisted by whalers for their voyages, or inveigled by bogus agents to colonize Venezuela, Brazil, or Equador, and thus swell the annual offering of victims to yellow fever. Here, likewise, are cook-shops that present their customers with salt pork, half-rotten oysters and decaying fish, that the very sea would reject; secret gambling hells, Chinese wash-houses, and various other lurking places for the lowest class of sailors; and, finally, numberless dens of vice, of misery, of hunger and of tears.

Yet, withal, the busiest life reigns in this quarter; for here the entire body of emigrants who can not find lodging in the barracks at Castle Garden, and who neither can nor will take refuge in the so-called "workhouses," herd together to live and to

die. If the emigrants include the scum of European society, the dwellers in these slums are the scum of the scum,—people who, partly from want of work, partly from slothfulness, have given themselves over to a life of idleness. At night revolver shots too often echo. Cries for help, hoarse shouts of rage, drinking songs of uproarious ruffians, or the howls of fighting negroes, break the stillness. All day groups of tramps and loungers assemble, with battered hats and pipes in their mouths, to look on at boxing matches, and to bet from one to five cents on every black eye. Pale children, and little negresses with woolly heads, run about the streets instead of going to school, playing jack-stones, or raking in the gutter for scraps of vegetables, oranges, and bananas. Haggard women stretch forth appealing hands to the better-dressed pedestrians who chance to stray thither.

In this human Gehenna we find once

more our acquaintances, Lorenz Toporek and his daughter Marysia. The fine estate that they had expected had proved but a dream, and had vanished with dreamlike swiftness. Reality took the form of a narrow little room, half underground, with but a single window, and that broken. The damp walls were covered with mould. On one side stood a worn-out stove, full of holes, and a three-legged stool. In the corner lay a little barley straw, that served as a bed. There was no other furniture in the room.

The old man knelt before the stove, and felt all round to discover if, by some happy chance, a potato was not hidden somewhere in the ashes. Alas, this was the second day that his search had proved vain!

Marysia cowered on the straw, her elbows propped on her knees, and stared motionless at the floor. The girl was ill and wretched-looking. She was the same Marysia, but

her once rosy cheeks were pale and sunken, her whole countenance was pinched, while her eyes seemed unnaturally large and bright. The effects of bad air, of sorrow, and of insufficient food, were plainly visible on her face. If she had only had sufficient potatoes! But, as we have said, their stock had run out two days before; in fact, they no longer knew on what they were to live. They had now subsisted for three months in this hole, therefore their money was all spent.

Old Lorenz had gone every day to seek for work; but no one understood what he wanted, since he knew not one word of English. He had gone to the harbor to carry luggage, or to help in loading the ships with coal; but he had no truck, and the other dockers almost picked his eyes out. He wanted to help in cutting wood to make a dock; but here again nearly got a broken head. What sort of workman

was this fellow, who could not understand what any one said to him? Whatever he tried his hand at, wherever he turned, he was laughed at, packed off, or knocked about and beaten. He had therefore found no means of earning or begging a cent. His hair had grown white with trouble, his hopes were exhausted, his money at an end, and now starvation had come to stare him in the face.

In his native country, amongst his own, even if he had lost all—if sickness had prostrated him, or if he had been driven out of his cabin,—he had only to take a stick in his hand and stand by a wayside Calvary, or at a church door and sing a hymn. The gentlemen who passed by would have given him alms. The ladies in their carriages would have sent one of their children with money in its chubby little hands, and would have looked pityingly at the beggar with their beautiful eyes. Every peasant would

have given him a bit of bread, every woman a piece of bacon; and he might have lived, if only like a bird. Moreover, standing by the crucifix, Christ's arms extended above him, he would have had the heavens over his head and the fair meadows around him. There, amidst the peace and quiet of the country, God would have heard his prayer. But here, in this great city, there was a constant turmoil, like the grinding of mill-stones,—everyone pushing and shoving, occupied with his own affairs, and unconcerned as to those of his neighbor.

Here the peasant's head reeled, his hands were paralyzed, his eyes unable to take in the kaleidoscopic view. Here all was strange and wonderful, repellent and extraordinary. He could not understand it. In this whirpool one should swim with the stream. Whoever got out of the course would be shattered like an earthen pitcher. What a difference between this place and

peaceful Lipinska! There Lorenz was a landlord; he possessed a little farm, the respect of his neighbors, and his daily bread. Every Sunday he went to church with his wax-candle. In America he was a nobody. Like a stray dog in a strange yard, he was forced to tremble, to cringe, and almost to starve. Often, in the early days of his misery, did he say to himself: "I was better off at home." And his conscience cried: "Lorenz, why did you leave Lipinska?"—Ah! why, indeed?

With all a peasant's patience he would have carried his cross, and borne all, if he could but have seen an end to this way of sorrows. Alas! he knew that every day his position grew more terrible, and that every coming dawn would bring greater misery to his daughter and himself. What was to be done? Should he twist a rope, say a prayer, and—hang himself? Death in itself has no terrors for a Polish peasant.

But the girl—what would become of her? When he thought of all this, he felt as if not only God but his senses had deserted him. Not a ray of light seemed to fall on this darkness.

To the greatest pain of all he could, however, give no name; and this pain was homesickness. Night and day it tormented him; and was the harder to bear, in that he did not know what ailed him, nor for what he yearned. He missed his fir-wood, his fields, his thatched cabin; the gentlemen, the peasants, the priests, and all that lay under Polish sky,—all that had grown into his heart so that it could not be torn out without his life-blood flowing. Many a time in his despair he longed to do something desperate—to tear his hair, to dash his head against the wall, to throw himself on the ground, to howl like a chained dog, to call everyone round him like a lunatic, and then—but what next he himself did

not know. This unfamiliar uproar had already half killed him; soon he would die —and the great city around heeded him not, but went noisily on its way. The poor, bewildered, dazed mortal sighed deeply, and invoked the holy name of Jesus. But here there were no wayside Calvaries,—no one understood him. And still the roar of the great city went on.

VII.

LORENZ FINDS FOOD.

On the barley straw sat Marysia, staring at the ground, and bearing her sufferings without a word, half starved though she was. No wonder that, though father and daughter often sat all day together, they seldom exchanged a word. It was as if they had quarrelled. Deep wounds are not to be lightly touched, and their sorrow was deep. What had they to say? That their pockets were empty? That there were no more potatoes in the oven? That they did not know what to do next?

There was no one to whom they could look for help. Although many Poles live in New York, none who have means reside in the vicinity of Chatham Square. It is true they had made the acquaintance

of two or three Polish families the second week after landing,—one from Silesia, another from the neighborhood of Posen; but they too were dying of hunger. The Silesian had already lost two children; the third, though ailing, slept with his parents under the arches of the bridge. They lived somehow on the scanty scraps they picked up in the street. Later on they were taken to the hospital, and what finally became of them Lorenz did not know. With the other family matters were even worse, for the father drank. Marysia supported the wife as long as she could, but now she herself needed support. To be sure she might have gone with her father to the Polish church in Hoboken and made herself known to the priest; but how was she to know there was a church there, or a Polish priest? How could she talk about it with any one or ask questions? Every cent they gave out was a downward step on

the ladder of misery; so there they sat,—he by the stove, she on the straw.

Hour after hour went by. In the room the light faded; then, though it was only midday, there arose, as is often the case in spring, the grey, penetrating sea-fog. Although in the yard it was still warm, in the room they trembled for cold. At last, when Lorenz had given up hope of finding anything more in the ashes, he said:

"Marysia, we can not stand this any longer. I am going down to the shore to look for wood. We shall then be warm, at any rate; and perhaps I may find something to eat."

She did not reply, so he went. For a long time past he had learned to go to the harbor to pick up drift-wood on the strand. That is what all do there who have no means of buying coal. Sometimes when so engaged the others had assaulted

him; often he was fortunate enough to find something eatable—the remains of spoiled vegetables, perhaps. As he strode through the fog, looking for what he had not lost, he forgot for a moment his misery and that yearning that was harder to bear than all. At last he reached the shore. It was the dinner hour, so there were only a few boys about, who at once began to shriek after him and pelt him with mud and shells. A quantity of broken wood was floating on the water. One wave dashed the pieces on the sand, the next swept them away; but soon he had collected an armful. There was also green stuff floating: perhaps it was something that might serve for food. As it was too light, it did not come to shore, so he could not seize it; but the boys hooked it in with twine and a stick. Lorenz had no twine, so he looked hungrily upon them, waiting until they went away. On their disappearance, he went through what

they left, and ate up all that appeared to be eatable, without thinking that his daughter too had had nothing for a long time. Fate smiled on him today.

Returning home, he met a wagon laden with potatoes, which had stuck fast in a rut on the way to the harbor, and could not be moved. Lorenz seized the spokes and shoved with the driver at the wheels. It was hard work, to be sure,—so hard that his back ached. But at last the horses tugged, the cart moved, and, as it was fully laden, a quantity of potatoes fell in the mud. The driver thought nothing of them; he thanked Lorenz for his help, cried "Get up!" to his horses, and proceeded on his way. Lorenz pounced on the potatoes, picked them up greedily, and with trembling hands filled all his pockets. At once he grew more hopeful and more courageous. If a hungry man finds a bit of bread, it seems to him that he has

discovered a treasure. As he walked, the peasant murmured to himself:

"Thanks be to Almighty God that He has looked down on our misery! Now we have wood, and Marysia can make a fire and roast as many potatoes as she likes. God is merciful, after all. That room won't seem so bad now, and how glad Marysia will be! Yes, God is merciful."

While he muttered these words he held the wood with one hand, and with the other kept constantly assuring himself that the potatoes were safe, and had not fallen out of his pockets. They were a real treasure-trove, and he raised his eyes thankfully to heaven as he still murmured: "I thought I should be forced to steal, but no! There they fell at my feet out of the cart, without my stealing; and now we once more have something to eat. The good God is merciful. Marysia will soon jump up when she hears that I have potatoes."

VIII.

MARYSIA.

Marysia, from the time her father left her, had not moved from the one spot. When Lorenz brought wood in the mornings, she generally lit the fire, fetched water, cooked and ate something—whatever there chanced to be,—then sat for hours staring at the fire. She, too, had sought for work. She had even been engaged at a boarding-house to wash and clean up; but when the people found they could not make themselves understood by her, they sent her away after two days. She neither sought nor found anything else. She was afraid to venture out, because drunken sailors followed her; and the enforced idleness made her more unhappy than ever.

Regrets gnawed Marysia's heart as

rust eats iron. She suffered even more than her father; for, in addition to hunger and all her other miseries, she knew she would never again be free from homesickness for Lipinska,—from the heavy burden of thoughts about Yasko. True, he had sworn: "Where you are, there too will I be." She, however, in her desire to become a rich heiress, had left her home; and how differently all had turned out from her expectations! He was still in service at the Squire's, still owned the little farm where his ancestors had lived before him, while she had become as poor as any church-mouse in Lipinska. Would he follow her? And if he did, would he take her to his heart? Would he say, "My poor, poor child! what you have suffered!" or "Get away, you beggar!"

What marriage-portion had she now? Rags. The very dogs in Lipinska would bark at her. Yet thither her heart was

drawn so forcibly that, if she could, her soul would have flown back across the sea like a swallow, if only to die at home; for there lived Yasko, her beloved. Did he think of her or not? With him alone could she find peace and joy,—with him alone of all men in the world. When there was a fire in the stove, and when hunger tormented her less than today, the flames, as they hissed and sparkled and flickered, spoke to her of Lipinska, and reminded her of the days when she sat with the other girls at the spinning-wheel, and Yasko looked in from the next room, and whispered to her: "Marysia, come with me to the priest. I love you dearly." And she answered: "Hold your tongue, you saucy boy!" Many a time, when the fire told her of this, her cheeks were wet with tears.

Today, however, there was no fire in the stove; and no tears were in her eyes, for she had wept them all away. She had a

sensation as if they lay heavy on her heart and took away her breath. She felt so weak and exhausted that she had no strength even to remember. For the rest she bore all humbly and in silence; and only stared blankly before her with large, sad eyes, like those of a bird being tormented by some cruel lad.

As she sat thus on the straw some one crossed the threshold. Thinking it was her father, Marysia did not raise her head, until a strange voice cried: "Look here!" It was the landlord, an old, ragged mulatto, with lowering brow, his cheek plugged with tobacco. When she saw him before her she was startled. She still owed him a dollar for the last week's rent, and she did not possess a single cent. Only by humility could she appease him. She approached him tremblingly, threw herself at his feet and kissed his hand.

"I have come for my dollar!" he cried.

She understood the word dollar only too well, and shook her head, trying to find speech; looked at him deprecatingly and entreatingly, endeavoring to make him comprehend that she had already given everything she had, and that for two days she had not tasted food; that she was hungry, and that he should have pity on her.

"God will repay you, kind gentleman," she added in Polish, as she no longer knew what she should say or do.

The "kind gentleman," to be sure, did not understand her, but he guessed that his dollar was not forthcoming; so, taking with one hand the bundle that contained her few possessions, and seizing the girl by the other, he pushed her out of the door and into the street, and threw her belongings after her. In the same phlegmatic fashion he opened the door of the neighboring public-house and cried:

"Hi, Jake! Here's a room for you."

"All right!" answered a voice from within. "I'll come tonight."

The mulatto thereupon disappeared in the dark passage way, and Marysia stood alone in the street. She placed the bundle in an angle of the house, that it might not get soiled; and then stood beside it, waiting humbly and quietly as before. The drunken men that passed by left her in peace for today. In the room it had been dark, but the street was still bright; and in the light the girl's face looked white and haggard, as if after a long illness. Her beautiful flaxen hair was the same as ever; but her lips were bluish, her eyes sad and sunken, and her cheek-bones prominent. She looked like a fading flower. The passers-by gazed at her with a sort of pity. An old negress even asked her some questions; but, receiving no answer, went on her way as if offended.

Meanwhile Lorenz hastened homeward, with the blessed feeling that once more he had potatoes. He thought of nothing but how good they would taste, and how he would go to the cart again tomorrow. To the next day he paid no heed, for he was too hungry. As he saw in the distance his daughter standing on the pavement before the house, he was not a little astonished, and walked even faster.

"Why on earth are you standing there, Marysia?" he cried.

"The landlord has turned us out, daddy."

"Turned us out?"

The wood fell from the peasant's hands. Of what use was it now? Turned out, at the very moment when he had got wood and potatoes! What were they to do? Where were they to go? Where were they to prepare their dainty dish? Lorenz, in distraction, threw his cap on the muddy ground with the kindling, and cried, "Jesus,

Jesus!" He ran hither and thither like one demented; then stopped and asked once more: "Did he turn us out?" Then he made as if to go, but came back again and said, hoarsely and angrily: "Why didn't you beg of him to let us stay, silly child?"

"I did beg him," she sighed.

"Did you throw yourself at his feet?"

"I did."

Lorenz writhed. A mist passed before his eyes. "My God! how ill you look!" he cried.

"Daddy, how can I help it?" replied the girl, looking sadly at him.

"Stay here. Don't stir. I'll go and speak to him, and beg of him to allow me at least to roast the potatoes."

He went. Soon after there was an uproar on the ground-floor—the sound of footsteps, loud voices, and then suddenly Lorenz was hurled into the street by a heavy fist. He stood still a moment, then said briefly to his

daughter: "Come." She stooped to take her bundle. It was too heavy for her in her enfeebled condition; but he did not help her, seeming as if he had forgotten, or did not see that the girl could scarcely carry the burden. Thus they went their way. Two such miserable creatures as the old man and the girl would no doubt have attracted the attention of the passers-by had these latter been less accustomed to look on misery. Whither could they go? What darkness, wretchedness, and anguish of mind they were enduring! The girl's breath grew more difficult, and, gasping time after time, she tottered. At last she whispered, entreatingly:

"Daddy, take the things,—I can carry them no longer."

He seemed as if awakening from a dream, and cried: "Well, throw them away."

"But they may be of use to us."

"Not they." Then for the first time he

saw the girl reel, and cried to her in a rage: "Throw them away, or I'll strike you!"

She was frightened, and obeyed him.

They went on. The peasant still kept murmuring, "I don't care what happens now." His look betrayed evil thoughts.

IX.

THE HARBOR.

Through alleys increasing in squalor they gained the end of the harbor, crossed the great bridge, and reached a building with the inscription "Sailors' Asylum." It stood close to the water's edge, where a dock was being built. High scaffoldings for ramming in the piles raised themselves out of the water, and between the beams and planks the people who were occupied at the work bustled about. Marysia sat on a log, as she could get no farther; and Lorenz sat silently beside her. It was already four o'clock in the afternoon, and the whole harbor was full of life and movement. The fog had lifted, and the sun with pitiful beams shone on the two sufferers and warmed them. The breath of spring, full of fresh-

ness, joy, and life, blew in from the sea. Around them sparkled so much light and blue ether that their eyes were dazzled by the brilliancy. In the distance the waters mingled with the sky. Near at hand, in the harbor, the ships' masts, funnels, and flags stood against the clear firmament. The colored ensigns fluttered lightly at every breath. On the horizon appeared ships hastening toward the land, now rising, now falling; their sails swelling like snowy clouds, and shining with dazzling whiteness against the azure of the water. Other vessels were outward bound, and the waves still foamed in their track. They were sailing east, where lay Lipinska, and therefore the lost happiness and peace of both the watchers.

Marysia began to wonder how they had sinned, how they could have offended God, that He, the All-good, turned His face from them alone, — had forgotten them here

among strangers, and cast them friendless on a foreign shore. And yet it lay in His hand to send them happiness again. So many ships sailed to Europe, but all without them. Once more her poor, wearied heart flew back to Lipinska, to Yasko. Did he still remember her? She remembered him—oh, how fondly! It is only when one is happy that one's love is lightly forgotten. In misfortune and loneliness it clings to our thoughts as the hop-vine to the poplar. He perhaps had long since forgotten his old sweetheart, and married another. He would almost be ashamed to think of so poor a girl,—a girl that owned nothing in the world but her chaplet of rue, and whose only bridegroom would be Death.

As she thought thus, being ill, her eyes closed and her pale face sank upon her breast in an uneasy slumber. Every now and then she awoke, and opened her eyes only to close them again. She dreamed she

was wandering amidst chasms and precipices; and fell, like Kasia in the old ballad, into "the deep Dunajec."* She seemed distinctly to hear voices singing:

"When Yasko he saw her, he followed her track,
By a silk rope descending to draw her safe back.
As the rope was too short, Marysia so fair
Now offered to lengthen its strands with her hair."

Suddenly she awoke, and felt as if her long plaits were there no longer, and that she was falling into an abyss. The dream had vanished. Not Yasko, but Lorenz was beside her; and she saw before her not the Dunajec, but New York harbor,—ships, scaffoldings, masts, and funnels. Some vessels weighed anchor, and from them songs resounded. A peaceful, warm, bright spring evening reddened the heavens and the water.

The sea, with its endless stretches, was

---

* The Dunajec rises in the Karpathians, and empties into the Weisdal.

smooth as a mirror. Every ship, every pile, appeared as if doubled, so plainly was it reflected in the water. All around was wonderfully beautiful. Peace and happiness filled the air. The whole world seemed to rejoice,—only they two were unhappy and forgotten. The workmen made their way home,—they alone had a home no longer. Hunger gnawed at Lorenz's entrails. Gloomy and brooding he sat there, a terrible resolution imprinted on his features. Whoever had seen his countenance, would have been shocked; for starvation had given him the expression of a bird of prey. His face was, moreover, despairingly calm and rigid, like the face of a corpse.

For a long time the old man spoke not a word to his daughter. It was only when night had fallen, and the harbor was deserted, that he said, in a hollow voice:

"Come, Marysia."

"Where, daddy?" asked the girl, stupefied with sleep.

"To the bridge. We will lie on a plank and sleep."

They went. In the darkness they had to go carefully, almost crawling, in order to avoid falling into the water. American bridges often have many a corner and corridor, at the end of which may be found a platform, and behind it a battering-ram for sending home the piles. On this platform, which is protected from the weather by a small roof, stand the men who work the battering-ram. Now, however, it was empty. As the father and daughter reached the farthest end, Lorenz said: "We will sleep here." Marysia laid herself, or rather sank, on a board; and, although a swarm of mosquitos rose about her, she was fast asleep in no time.

In the dead of the night she suddenly heard her father's voice:

"Marysia, my own Marysia, get up!"

In this command was something that roused her at once to full consciousness.

"What is it, daddy?"

In the midst of the stillness and darkness of the night she heard the voice of the old man, quiet, but hollow and terrifying:

"Girl, you shall no longer starve nor beg for bread, nor sleep upon the earth. God and men have forsaken you. Here the water is deepest. You shall suffer no longer"

She could not see him in the darkness, though her eyes were wide open through terror.

"I will drown you, my poor child. I will do it myself. There is no hope for us, no mercy for us. Tomorrow you will no more want to eat; tomorrow you will be better off than today."

But she did not want to die. No. She was but eighteen years of age, and still possessed

that attachment to life and that fear of death that come from youth. She trembled to her very soul at the thought that tomorrow she should disappear, drowned in the darkness, or lie at the bottom of the sea, amidst fishes and slimy monsters. No, not for the world! Indescribable revolt and terror filled her at the idea; and her own father, as he spoke so to her out of the night, seemed as an evil spirit.

Meanwhile his hands rested on her thin shoulders, and he went on, with the same dreadful calm: "No matter how loudly you cry, there is no one to hear you. I will throw you in, and it will all last scarcely as long as you would take to say two *Paters*."

"But I won't, daddy! I won't!" said Marysia. "Are you not afraid of Almighty God? My darling father, take pity on me! What have I done to you? I have never complained. I have borne all patiently with you, daddy,—hunger and cold."

His breath came quicker; his hands seized her like pincers, but she fought more and more passionately against death.

"Have pity, have compassion on me! I am your child, and already so ill and suffering that I shall not now be long in the world. Oh, I am frightened, I am frightened!"

While she sobbed she held fast to his coat, and pressed her lips entreatingly to his hands, that sought to push her into the depths. All this seemed only to exasperate him. His calm disappeared in a wild frenzy; his teeth rattled like those of a dying man.

For a time both were silent. On shore there could only be heard heavy breathing and the creaking of the planks. The night was dark, and there was no help at hand; for this was the extremity of the harbor, where even by day no one came except the workmen.

"Mercy! mercy!" cried the girl.

He pressed her forcibly with one hand

toward the edge of the scaffolding, while with the other he seized her head to stifle her cries; but her voice awakened no echo, only now and then a dog howled in the distance. She felt herself growing weaker; her limbs already hung over the scaffolding, her hands alone held fast to her father; but she was getting exhausted. At last she tore the lapels of his coat, and she felt herself falling. As she slipped from the platform, she caught hold of the planks and remained suspended above the water. But the peasant bent over, and—the pen hesitates to describe it—sought to detach, to wrench away her hands!

Like a flock of frightened birds, the thoughts flew through Marysia's brain in lightning pictures: Lipinska, the well, her departure, the ship, the storm on sea, the Litany, the misery in New York, and finally what was to become of her. She saw before her a mighty ship, and on it a great crowd

of people, and from this crowd two arms outstretched to her. God in heaven! there stood Yasko! It was he who stretched out his arms; and above him in glory smiled our Blessed Lady. At this sight Marysia seemed to push her way through the people to the shore, and to cry: "Most Holy Virgin! Yasko, Yasko, wait a minute!"

Once more she raised her eyes to her father. "Daddy, see, there is the Mother of God!"

In another moment those hands that had sought her destruction seized her exhausted frame, and with supernatural strength drew her onto the platform. She felt once more beneath her feet the solid beams of the scaffolding, and was embraced by the arms not of her executioner, but of her father, on whose breast her head fell. When she recovered consciousness, she was reclining quietly near Lorenz. Dark as it was, she saw that he lay there as if crucified; she

heard him sobbing and groaning as if his heart overflowed with agony.

"Marysia," he said at last, brokenly, "forgive me, my child—God forgive me!"

She felt in the dark for his hand, pressed it to her lips, and whispered: "Daddy, may the Lord Jesus forgive you, as I do!"

From out the pale light that for some time had glimmered on the horizon the full moon now appeared. And again something wonderful happened. Marysia saw how from the moon a whole troop of angels descended like golden bees on the silver rays, rustling softly round her, turning as if they danced, and singing with children's voices: "Poor, suffering girl, peace be to you! Poor, gentle, patient flower, peace be to you!" Then they scattered on Marysia white lilies and little bells of bright gold, and they sang: "Sleep softly, maiden,—sleep in peace!" She felt so happy, all seemed so clear and still, that she really did fall asleep.

The night was past. It was already dawn. Across the water shone the first rays of the sun. Out of the shadow the masts and funnels seemed to rise and draw nearer. Lorenz bowed himself over Marysia. He thought she was dead. Her slender form lay motionless; her eyes were closed, with dark circles under them; her cheeks as white as wax, and her features as still as a corpse. But when he placed his hand upon her lips, he felt that she breathed. Her heart beat too, but so faintly that at any moment it might stop. And yet he hoped again that when the daylight appeared through the fog, and the sun warmed her, she would awaken. Above her the sea-gulls shrieked, as if anxious as to her fate; some of them perched on the nearest planks. The morning mist parted at every moment before the breath of the west wind, and this breath was as mild and warm as if it carried the spring on its back.

Then the sun rose. Its first beams gilded the tops of the scaffolding. Little by little they fell on Marysia's countenance, as if to kiss and caress it. In this glory, and crowned by her fair hair, tossed as it was by the struggle of the night and the wind of morning, hers was the face of an angel. Marysia, indeed, had almost become an angel through the misery and misfortune she had endured.

Meantime a wonderful rosy dawn spread over the placid waters. The sun's rays strengthened. The wind sighed pityingly round the sleeper; the gulls swept over her, shrieking as if to waken her. Lorenz drew off his coat, and covered her feet with it. New hope awakened in his heart. As he watched her, he saw the grayness of her complexion disappear, and a faint red tint mount to her cheeks. She began to smile, and at last opened her eyes.

The old peasant knelt on the bridge,

raised his eyes to heaven, and a stream of tears ran down his wrinkled cheeks. Now he felt once more that this child was the apple of his eye and the soul of his soul,—a sacred possession, beloved above all. She was not only awake, but much fresher and better than yesterday. The pure sea-air had been more wholesome for her than the tainted atmosphere of their room. She had taken a new lease of life. When she had seated herself on a plank she said:

"Daddy, now I should like something to eat."

"Come, child," he said softly. "Perhaps we may find something across the water."

They went. Apparently this was to be an exceptional day amongst the days of their misery; for scarcely had they gone a few steps when they saw on the scaffolding, hidden between two planks, a cloth in which were tied a loaf of white bread and

some salt meat. This might be simply explained by the fact that one of the workmen had put away part of his provisions, as the people there often do. However, Lorenz and Marysia found it still easier of explanation. Who had laid the food there? To their minds only Him who thinks of every flower, every bird, every insect—the good God.

Little as it was, they uttered a prayer of thanks, ate it, and, with renewed strength, made their way across the water to the chief docks, past the Custom House, up Water Street to Broadway. It took them several hours, for the way was long. Now and then they rested on a pile of wood or an empty box. They went without knowing why or whither. Marysia felt, somehow, as if she should go to the city.

X.

THE EXILES MEET A FRIEND.

On the way Lorenz and Marysia met a procession of wagons going toward the harbor. In Water Street there was as yet but little life; people were issuing from the open doorways and hastening to their daily employment.

At one of these doors stood a tall, elderly gentleman, with a young lad by his side. As he saw the pair in their Polish costume he shrugged his shoulders. His face expressed astonishment, then he looked more closely and smiled. A human countenance that smiled kindly at them was a marvel for the poor wanderers. It seemed magical, and both were astonished at this glance.

Meantime the gentleman approached them, and asked in the purest Polish:

"How have you people come here?"

They were thunderstruck. The peasant, instead of answering, became white as a sheet, tottered as if about to fall, and could scarcely believe his ears. Marysia, who was the first to recover, fell at the feet of the stranger and embraced them in Polish fashion, as she cried:

"We are from Posen, honored sir,—from near Posen."

"What are you doing here?"

"We are living here in hunger, want and misery, good sir." And Marysia's voice broke.

Lorenz also threw himself at the gentleman's feet, kissed the hem of his coat, and held him as if he had dropped from heaven. This was a real gentleman; and, moreover, a gentleman who would not let them die of hunger, but would deliver them.

The young fellow who was with the elder man stared in wonder. The people about

stood open-mouthed to see one man kneeling before another and kissing his feet. In America, above all places, this is not customary. The old gentleman, however, cried angrily to the on-lookers:

"This is no affair of yours! Please go about your business!" Then he turned to Lorenz and Marysia. "We'll not stay here in the street. Come with me."

He led them to the nearest hotel, asked for a private apartment, and shut himself in with the lad and them. They again wanted to fall at his feet, but he exclaimed:

"Have done with all this nonsense. Are we not from the same place, and children of the same mother?" Here the smoke of his cigar evidently got into his eyes, for he rubbed them with the back of his hand. Then he asked: "Are you hungry?"

"For two days we have eaten nothing; today for the first time we found a little food by the water-side."

"William," he said to the lad, "let them have something to eat." Then he went on to ask: "Where do you live?"

"Nowhere, your honor."

"Where did you sleep last night?"

"By the water-side."

"How was that? Were you turned out of your lodgings?"

"Yes, your honor."

"Have you nothing but what is on your back?"

"Nothing, your honor."

"And no money?"

"Not a farthing."

"And what is to become of you?"

"We don't know ourselves."

The old gentleman asked all this as hastily as if he were out of temper. Then he turned suddenly to Marysia:

"How old are you, girl?"

"I shall be eighteen on the Feast of the Assumption."

"And have already suffered so much!"

She did not answer, but curtsied humbly.

Again the smoke got into the eyes of the kind-hearted stranger.

Beer and hot meat were now brought in. The old gentleman ordered them to fall to, and called them foolish when they hesitated to do so in his presence. Despite his rough manner, he seemed to them like an angel from heaven. While they ate he took pleasure in watching them, then made them tell how they had come there, and what had induced them to emigrate. Lorenz hid nothing from him, but confessed all as if to a priest. The old gentleman was rather cross, and scolded him all the time. When Lorenz told him how he wanted to throw Marysia into the water, he cried:

"If you had, I'd have broken every bone in your body." And, turning to Marysia, he continued: "Come here, girl."

When she drew near, he took her head in

both his hands, kissed her on the forehead, reflected a moment, and then said:

"You have known great adversity; but this is a fine country, though one must know how to help himself."

Lorenz stared at him astonished. This distinguished and prudent gentleman actually said that America was a fine country!

"So it is, you poor rascal!" the latter went on, as he noted the peasant's surprise. This *is* a fine country. When I came here, I had nothing: now I can make my bread. But you peasants should stick to your land instead of flying all round the world. If you emigrate, who is to stay behind? You are of no use here. It is easy to come, but it is hard to get back." After a pause he went on, as if speaking to himself: "More than forty years have I been here, and one almost forgets the old country after such a lapse of time; but the longing for it one never loses. My William here

must go back, must learn to know the land where his forefathers lived. See, that is my son," said he to Lorenz. "Then, William," he added, "you will bring me a handful of earth from home. You will lay it under my head in the coffin."

"Yes, father," answered the youth in English.

"And on my breast, William,—here on my breast."

"Yes, father."

Again the smoke affected his eyes. They grew dim. Then he went on, angrily: "The rascal understands Polish perfectly well, but he prefers to speak English. So it has to be here. Whoever succeeds here is lost forever to his own country. Go, my son, tell your sister that we have visitors coming to spend the evening and the night."

The youth hurried away.

For a long time the old gentleman sat as if deep in thought. "Shall I send them

back?" he mused. "That would be very expensive, and what use would it be? Whatever they possessed they sold; they would be beggars. And the girl at service! God knows what might become of her. As they are here, one must try to get them work, and send them to some settlement. The girl will soon find a husband, and both he and she will earn their bread. If they like to go back after a time, they can take the father with them." At last he turned and spoke aloud to Lorenz:

"Have you already heard of our settlement here?"

"No, your honor."

"But how on earth, good people, did you venture to come? As God is above me, you were bound to go to destruction. In Chicago there are already twenty thousand like you; in Milwaukee as many; in Detroit and Buffalo the same. There they work in the factories: peasants should till the

ground. On the plains of Nebraska they are now founding a New Posen; that is, however, very far away, and the fare too dear. Panna Marya in Texas is almost as far. The best place for you will be Borowina; the more so as I shall be able to get free passes for you, so that what I put in your hands you can spend on housekeeping."

After a pause for further consideration he continued, suddenly: "Listen. Now they are just making a new settlement—Borowina in Arkansas. That is a fine, warm country, almost entirely waste and empty. There you will get a bit of land and wood from the Government—about one hundred and sixty acres,—and the railway journey for nothing, or at most for very little. Do you understand? Whatever you will require for housekeeping I will give you, and also your tickets; for that I can do. You will go by rail to the town of Little Rock.

There you will find wagons for the rest of the journey, and I will give you letters. I will gladly help you; for I am your brother. I pity the girl far more than you, old man,—do you understand? Thank God that you met me."

Then he turned and said, in a softer voice, to Marysia: "Here, my child, take my card; keep it safely; and if ever you are in want and misery, if ever you feel yourself isolated and defenceless, seek me out at once. You are a poor girl, but you are a good girl. If I am then no more, my William will help you. But do not lose the card. Now come with me."

On the way he bought them linen and clothes, then brought them to his house and received them as guests. They were all kind people there; for William and his sister Jenny regarded them as relatives. Master William even treated Marysia like a lady, which greatly confused her.

In the evening came some friends of Jenny, who were gentle and refined, and elegantly dressed. They placed Marysia in their midst, admired her pallor, her beauty, and her flaxen hair; and laughed aloud as she respectfully bowed to the ground before them, embraced their feet and kissed their hands. The old gentleman moved about amongst the young people, shaking his white head, growling angrily to himself, partly in English, partly in Polish, and conversing with Marysia and Lorenz about the distant fatherland. He melted at old recollections, and secretly wiped his eyes more than once. The cigar smoke no doubt had got into them again.

XI.

THE JOURNEY TO LITTLE ROCK.

The third day Lorenz and his daughter began their journey to Little Rock. The peasant fingered one hundred dollars in his pocket, and had long since forgotten all his misery. Marysia felt the Hand of God over her, and believed trustingly that this Hand would not allow her to parish; that it had drawn her out of misery, would guide Yasko to America, protect both of them, and in the end bring them back safe to Lipinska.

Meanwhile, through the carriage windows, she saw towns and country farms fly past. Here again all was different from New York: far and wide nothing but fields and woods, little houses overshadowed by trees, green meadows and

waving cornfields—just as at home in far-away Poland.

Lorenz's heart leaped at the sight, so that he could have sung: "Hurrah for the woods and the green fields!" In the meadows oxen and sheep were grazing; in the forests they saw woodcutters with axes. The train puffed on farther and farther. By degrees the neighborhood became more sparsely inhabited. The farms disappeared, and a desolate steppe stretched out before them. Only grass waved, only flowers fluttered in the wind; now and then, in the windings like golden ribbons, might be seen yellow tracks on which wagons had once been driven. High shrubs, such as thistles and wild cotton, lowered their heads as if to greet the travellers. Eagles swept on mighty pinions over the steppe, and looked greedily for prey. But onward, ever onward, went the train, as if to fly to where this steppe disappeared from sight

and seemed to melt into the sky. From the windows of the train one could see troops of hares and field-mice, and now and then a deer. Nowhere was visible a church tower, a town, a village, or even a house except the stations; between these and all round, not a living soul. Lorenz remarked this, and shook his head, as if wondering why so much splendid land should lie fallow.

Thus a day and night passed. Next morning they reached the woods, where trees and climbing plants as large as a man's arm formed such a thicket that one could only penetrate it by means of an axe. Strange birds flitted through the primeval forest. Many a time, too, there sprang from the mossy ground riders with feathers on their heads and faces as red as plates of copper. As Lorenz saw all this — these woods, these bare steppes, these unknown wonders and strange beings,—he could no longer contain himself, and spoke:

"Marysia."

"What is it, daddy?"

"Do you see?"

"Yes, I see."

"And are you astonished?"

"Yes."

At last they crossed a river thrice as broad as the Wartha, which they learned later was called the Mississippi; and in the middle of a pitch-dark night they reached Little Rock. Here they were to ask the way to Borowina. They were now abandoned in a moment. The second part of their pilgrimage for daily bread was ended. The third was to be in the woods, amidst the clang of axes and the hardships of a settler's life. Whether it will be marked by fewer tears, less sorrow and distress, the reader may soon learn.

PART III.

XII.

BOROWINA.

What was Borowina? A settlement in the making. The name had apparently been taken from the neighboring mountain. For a long time previous, Polish and even English newpapers, published in New York, Chicago, Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee, Denver—everywhere, in fact, that one hears the Polish tongue,—had proclaimed to the world, *urbi et orbi*, that whoever wanted to be healthy and wealthy, to eat well, live long, die happy, and be eternally saved, had only to betake himself to that earthly Paradise, Borowina.

Further, these journals declared that, although Arkansas, in which State the set-

tlement was to be founded, was as yet for the most part a wilderness, it possessed the finest climate in the world. To be sure, the little town of Memphis, that stood on the boundary near the other side of the Mississippi, was a hotbed of yellow fever; but neither this nor any other fever was capable of crossing such a river. The settlers in Borowina were, of course, planted between fever on the east and redskins on the west; but on entirely neutral ground, which had so great a future before it that in a thousand years Borowina would undoubtedly possess two millions of inhabitants, and the land which now sold for half a dollar an acre would fetch at least a thousand dollars the square rod.

Such promises and prospects were scarcely to be resisted. Whoever objected to the vicinity of the Choctaws was assured that this warlike race had a particular sympathy with the Poles, so that the most friendly

relations with them might be anticipated. Moreover, it was well known that wherever a railway ran through the forests and plains, its telegraph poles rising like crosses, these crosses might stand as funeral monuments to the Indians; and as the land below Borowina would be bought by a railway company, the disappearance of the Indians was only a question of time. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the land had already been acquired by the directors. This would secure to the settlement a link with the outer world—a *desideratum* for the export of its products, and for its prospects of future development.

The papers, it is true, forgot to add that this railway was merely projected; and that funds had yet to be raised for the purchase of the strip of ground from the Government, and for beginning the necessary works. This forgetfulness, however, was easily forgiven in such a business. They

omitted, also, to add that Borowina, instead of lying near this railway track, lay deep in the backwoods, and was only to be reached by wagon after considerable exertions. To be sure, many disadvantages might arise from such forgetfulness; but they would be transitory (thought the scribes), and would come to an end with the opening of the railway. Moreover, it was known that people should not take such announcements literally; for in America one is not supposed to winnow more than a grain of truth from a bushel of rhetorical chaff.

But apart from the so-called "humbug" that might be expected in these announcements as to Borowina, it was always understood that this settlement was in nowise worse than a thousand others whose foundation was greeted with at least equal exaggeration. The conditions in many respects seemed even more favorable than was generally the case. A crowd of people,

therefore, all of Polish nationality—as they are to be found scattered throughout the United States, from the Great Lakes to the tropical forests of Florida, and from the Atlantic to the shores of California,—thronged as settlers to the newly established colony. Galicians, Lithuanians from the Government of Augustovo, inhabitants of Posen, and Masurs from the neighborhood of Warsaw, who worked in factories at Chicago and Milwaukee, but had long sighed for a free peasant's life in the open air,—all seized joyfully the first opportunity to leave their smoky, sooty towns, and once more to grasp the plough and the axe in the distant meadows, woods, and plains of Arkansas. Those for whom Panna Marya in Texas was too hot, or Minnesota too cold, or Detroit too damp, united themselves to the first party, and emigrated to Arkansas in a body some hundreds strong. This first party was composed mostly of men,

but contained also many women and children.

Even the name, "Bloody Arkansas," had no terrors for them; although at that time, besides thieving Indians, there were many outlaws, who had fled thither to escape legal penalties; wild squatters who, in spite of the law, grubbed up the trees at Red River; and many other villains and adventurers who had cheated the gallows. But all this did not deter our settlers. The Masur, when he has his knobbed stick in his hand, a countryman beside him and another at his back, is not easily daunted. It was well known that the Masurs stuck to one another, and always emigrated together.

The town of Little Rock was the meeting place for most of the party; but from there to Clarksville, the next settlement, whose neighbor Borowina was to be, the distance was somewhat greater than from Warsaw to Cracow; and, what was worse, the road lay

through deserts, forests, and swamps. Already many of those who had not waited for company, but set out alone to find their way, had disappeared, leaving no track behind. The chief caravan, however, had happily got through in safety, and had already pitched a camp in the midst of the woods.

Frankly speaking, the settlers were somewhat disillusioned when they saw the sort of place they had come to. They had expected to find at least land ready and prepared for colonization; but instead of this they found a wilderness to be cleared. Black oaks, redwood, cotton-plants, gay plantains and dark pines were crowded together. This forest was no joke.

Apart from the dense underwood, the trees were bound together by lianas above, that climbed from trunk to trunk like suspension-bridges, or twisted and tangled themselves like knots and cords,—weaving

here a veil, there a drapery decked with flowers; and growing so closely that the eye could not penetrate their mass, nor rove from point to point, as in European woods.

Whoever made his way into these forest recesses could no longer see the heavens above him, but wandered in the twilight of dense foliage, losing his way only too easily, never more to find it, perhaps. Many a Masur looked first at his brawny fists, next at his axe, and then at the enormous oaks, feeling his courage give way as he looked. Timber for log-huts and for firing was here to be had in abundance; but to fell this forest, to grub the roots, to clear the land and finally to plough it, would be the work of a year. And yet there was nothing else for it; so many a one, the first few days after his arrival, shrugged his shoulders, moistened his hands, seized his axe and made the chips fly. Day by day the music

of the axes rang through this Arkansas jungle, with the echo of the song—

To the wood went Yasienko,
And loudly sang he:
Come, dearest Kasienka,
To the forest with me—
The dark forest with me.

The caravan halted on the bank of the river, by a spreading meadow, on whose borders the log-huts were to arise, and in the centre of which were to be a chapel and a school; but all this was as yet far off. At present there stood only the wagons in which the settlers and their families had come.

These wagons were placed so as to form a triangle, that might serve as a fortress in case of an attack. Behind them, in the upper part of the meadow, grazed the mules and horses, the oxen and sheep, watched by one of the younger men, fully armed.

The people slept in the wagons, or behind them in their barricade of trees, by the

embers of the camp fires. The women and children remained all day at Tabor; but the whereabouts of the men was indicated by the ringing of the axes, which resounded through the whole forest. At night wild animals, wolves and jaguars, howled in the distance. Bears, that are less afraid of fire, often crept close to the wagons; and not seldom in the middle of the night there would be heard the sound of gunshots and the cry, "The brute has got something!"

Those who had come from the wilds of Texas were mostly practised hunters, who easily secured game for themselves, especially antelopes, deer, and buffaloes; for in spring these animals wander northward in herds. The remaining settlers lived on the provisions which they had procured at Little Rock or Clarksville; these consisted chiefly of ground maize and salt meat. Moreover, sheep were slaughtered occasionally, and each family received a portion.

In the evenings a great fire was kindled near the wagons, and after supper most of the youngsters danced instead of going to bed. Every musician fetched his fiddle, and played something by ear. If the violin died away rather too quickly in the depths of the forest and in the open air, some of the party accompanied the player on tin cans.

Owing to the heavy work to be done, the life was bustling and disorderly. The chief thing was to build the log-huts. Soon the framework of the houses rose above the green meadows; but the roofs were composed only of strips of bark, chips, and other stray fragments of wood; for though redwood is easily worked, it often has to be fetched from a distance. Meantime many constructed tents for themselves out of pieces of canvas that they had ripped from the wagons. Others—the unmarried ones, who were less concerned about having a roof over their heads, and who found uproot-

ing too difficult,—began to plough in those spots where the underwood was not too thick, and where oaks and other hard-wood trees were scarcer.

Generally speaking, there was so much for the settlers to do that they did not know where to begin: whether first to build the log-huts, or to seize a hoe, or to go hunting. In the very beginning it was proved that their attorney had bought the land from the railway company with his eyes shut—without ever having seen the place. Otherwise he would not have purchased this veritable wilderness; for he might just as easily have had a bit of the plain, that was only partially covered with timber.

Later, to be sure, he came, with the representative of the railway company, to measure out the land and to show each one his portion. When both saw how matters stood, they quarrelled with each other for two days, and then returned to Clarksville,

ostensibly on account of their instruments for surveying. They never again showed their faces in the settlement.

Soon it became known that some of the settlers had paid too much and others too little for the land; and, what was worse, no one knew where his lot lay, nor how he was to measure what had fallen to him. Thus they stood, without any one in authority who might have protected their rights and adjusted their differences. No one even knew how or where he should work. Germans, no doubt, would have combined without loss of time, cleared the forest, prepared a strip of land, put up their log-huts, and measured off a bit of ground by each house. Every Masur, however, wanted to seize on his own property from the very beginning; to build his cabin himself, and to work at his own bit of wood. Everyone likewise wanted to live, if possible, in the middle of the meadow,

farthest from the forest and nearest to the water.

Hence arose innumerable dissensions, that grew and grew from the day when appeared, as if it had fallen from heaven, the wagon of a certain Herr Grünmanski. This gentleman might, in quarters where Germans dwell, say in Cincinnati, have called himself simply Grünmann; but in Borowina he added the "ski," for the good of trade. His wagon had a high linen roof, on both sides of which appeared, in great black letters, the inscription, "Saloon." Underneath, in somewhat smaller lettering, might be seen the words: "Brandy. Whisky. Gin." How this wagon had reached its destination unharmed through the dangerous wilderness between Clarksville and Borowina, and why the Indians that scoured the country in small parties had not scalped Herr Grünmann, was his own secret, and so remained. Suffice it to say,

he came, and did excellent business the very first day.

The unfortunate settlers continued to quarrel worse than ever. To the thousand disputes as to their lots, their tools, their sheep, and their seats by the fire, were added others about the most trifling occurrences. It was as if the patriotism of the American backwoods awoke in them. Those that had come from the Northern States praised their former abode, at the expense of the colony and of the settlers from the Southern States; and *vice versâ*. At last a regular fight ensued, in which people from one town or settlement united against their rivals from another. The older and more experienced gradually, it is true, grew in respect and power, but could not always maintain the peace. Only in times of danger did the universal instinct of self-preservation put an end to discord.

One evening when a troop of Indians had

stolen several sheep, the peasants set off after them in a body, without a moment's reflection. They took back the sheep from the redskins in triumph, and beat one of the thieves so severely that he was left for dead. This day perfect peace reigned, but on the very next there was a row over the stubbing. There generally was peace, too, in the evenings, when the violin played, not perhaps always dance music, but all sorts of songs, that everyone had heard before under the thatched roof at home Then conversation ceased; the peasants made a circle round the player; the murmur of the woods accompanied him; the fire on the hearth hissed and crackled and sent forth showers of sparks; but the men hung their heads in silence, and their souls were wafted across the sea. Often the moon rose high above the forest, and still they listened to the violin. With the exception of these few minutes, the settlement from day to

day grew in disorder and in the hate of rival parties. This little commune in the midst of the forest, separated and, so to say, torn away from the rest of mankind, and deserted by its leaders, was at its wit's end.

XIII.

BLACK ORLIK.

Among the colonists at Borowina we find once more two well-known faces—the old peasant, Lorenz Toporek, and his daughter Marysia. In the beginning things went better with them here than before. A forest is not a New York pavement, on which nothing grows to support life. Here they possessed a wagon, some furniture (for which, by the way, they had to pay a high price at Clarksville), and the necessary agricultural implements. There homesickness had tormented them; here constant work gave them no time for idle reverie. Lorenz had to fell trees from morning until night, or chop wood, or cut planks for the log-hut; while Marysia looked after the washing and the fire. Despite her hard

work, the sweet forest air and the exercise gradually effaced from her countenance the traces of illness impressed on it by misery in New York. The warm southern winds tanned her lovely face, throwing a bronzed tint over its former pallor. The young men from San Antonio and the Great Lakes, who were ready to box one another on the least provocation, agreed about one thing—that Marysia's friendly eyes looked out from under her masses of flaxen hair like corn-flowers in the rye, and that she was the prettiest girl they had ever seen.

Marysia's charms benefited Lorenz. He sought out that portion of the forest where the trees grew thinnest, and no one hindered him; for all the lads were on his side. Many even helped him with the wood-cutting or in hewing the logs and making them ready. The sly old fellow saw through this soon enough, and said from time to time: "My daughter is like a lily; her path

should be strewn with roses as if she were a lady, a queen. I'll give her to the man I choose, not to the first that comes. Whoever is most civil to me and serves me best shall get her, but no loafer." Whoever helped him thought, therefore, he was helping himself. Lorenz in this way fared better than most of the others; and, on the whole, all had gone well, if the settlement had only had a future before it. As it was, things were growing worse from day to day.

A fortnight passed by. All round the meadow trees were felled; the ground was covered with chips; here and there rose the yellowish walls of a block-house. What was done, however, was but child's play to what remained to do. The green wall of the forest fell but slowly before the strokes of the axe; those who penetrated the thicket brought back strange news. The forest was endless; farther in were terrible swamps and morasses, as if the water still

slept under the trees. There dwelt all kinds of horrors; things glided like ghosts through the brushwood, or hissed like snakes; even voices were heard to cry out: "Enter not!" Strange plants caught at one's clothes; and if once they seized hold of an unwary explorer, would never let him go. A fellow from Chicago told how he had met Satan in person, who raised his terrible head out of the swamp and snorted at him in such a fashion that he was scarcely able to make his way back. The settlers from Texas declared to him that his Satan was nothing worse than a buffalo, but he would not believe it; and so to possible danger were added the prejudices of superstitious terror.

A few days later it came to pass that two foolhardy adventurers plunged into the forest, and were never seen again; several people fell ill with pains in the back brought on by over-exertion; and, to crown

all, fever broke out. The quarrels about the lots became so vehement that they led to bloodshed. Whoever did not brand his cattle found his ownership disputed. The wagons were planted in all corners of the meadow, so as to be as far from one another as possible. No one any longer knew whose duty it was to tend the cattle. The sheep either died in numbers or were lost.

One thing grew daily more evident—that ere the seed in the clearings could spring up and blossom into a harvest, the people would be threatened with want of food, and perhaps with death from starvation. They were in despair. The ring of axes in the forest decreased, patience and courage failed. Each settler would willingly have worked if only some one could authoritatively say to him: "Take this. From here to there is your portion." But no one knew what was his or not. The complaints against the agents became daily louder. The people

said they had led them into the wilderness to perish miserably. By degrees everyone that had a penny in his pocket seated himself in his wagon and drove back to Clarksville; most, however, had spent all, and therefore were unable to return to where they formerly lived. They wrung their hands, for they saw before them their own destruction. At last the felling of trees entirely ceased, and the rustling of the leaves was the only sound. It seemed as if mocking the faint-heartedness of men.

One evening Lorenz came to Marysia and said: "We'll starve here like the rest."

"That is as God wills," replied the girl; "but the All-Merciful will not now abandon us." With these words she raised her blue eyes to heaven, and in the glimmer of the firelight they shone like a holy picture.

The lads from Chicago and the Texan hunters looked at her, and cried out: "We'll not abandon you, Marysia!"

She thought to herself: "The only one that I'd follow to the ends of the earth was my Yasko in Lipinska; but he has not kept his promise to follow me over the sea, 'like a stork through the air, or a duck through the water, or a gold ring rolling down a steep road.' He alone has forsaken me."

Marysia could no longer conceal from herself that things were going badly with them here; but God had already delivered them from such an abyss, and had so purified her soul, that nothing was capable of shaking her confidence in His aid. Besides, she remembered that the old gentleman in New York who had helped them, taken them out of misery and sent them here, had given her his card, and promised at any time to aid her if misfortune overtook her and she turned to him.

Meantime each day brought new troubles to the settlers. One after another stole away in the night, and no one knew what

became of them; but the forest rustled as mockingly as ever. Old Lorenz at last fell ill from exhaustion, tormented by violent pains in the back. For two days he paid no attention to his symptoms, but on the third he was unable to rise. Marysia ran to the forest, gathered moss, placed her father upon it, and prepared him some medicine with brandy in it.

"Marysia," murmured the peasant, "Death is coming to me out of that forest. Then you will be alone in the world, a desolate orphan. God is punishing me severely for my sins, because I brought you across the ocean and led you to destruction. My end will be a hard one."

"Daddy," replied the girl, "God would have punished me still more severely if I had not gone with you."

"If I were not leaving you so entirely alone—if I might see you married and give you my blessing,—I should die more easily.

Marysia, take Black Orlik for your husband; he is an honest fellow, who will never desert you."

Scarcely had Black Orlik, a hunter from Texas, heard these words than he threw himself on his knees and cried: "Yes, father, give us your blessing. I know all about the forest, and I'll let no harm befall her."

With these words he glanced at Marysia with his hawk's eyes; but she bowed herself to the old man's feet and said: "Don't compel me to take him, daddy. I'll marry the man to whom I promised to be faithful, or no one."

"The fellow to whom you gave that promise will never get you. I'll kill him first. Mine you must be or no one's else," cried Orlik. "You'll die here of starvation like the others, if I don't save you."

Black Orlik was not mistaken: the end of the settlement had come. The provisions

were exhausted, and already the oxen destined for work were being slaughtered. Every day the fever claimed fresh victims, and the people either cursed this wilderness or called loudly to Heaven for rescue.

XIV.

THE FOREST ON FIRE.

One Sunday old and young, with their wives and children, knelt on the turf and sang: "Holy God, Almighty, Immortal, have pity on us!" The forest no longer murmured, but listened. Only when the litany ceased it began again to rustle as if to cry threateningly: "Here *I* am Lord and King and Almighty!" But Black Orlik, who was familiar with the forest, fixed his piercing eyes on it and cried aloud: "Hello! We'll see to that."

The people looked at Orlik, and new courage filled their hearts. All who came from Texas had great confidence in him; for he was celebrated there as a hunter. The lad, who had grown up on the wild plains, was as strong as an oak, and could

overcome a bear in single combat. In San Antonio, where he formerly lived, he had many a time gone off into the woods with his gun and did not come back for long months; but he always returned in the end fresh and unharmed. They said he had gone as far as the borders of Mexico. From there he had brought only skins, and sometimes Indians' scalps. Here in Borowina Orlik never troubled himself about anything. He had no cares; for the forest gave him food, drink, and clothing. While all the others lost their head and fled away, he took things in his own hands and captained all his fellow-countrymen from Texas, as the first wild goose leads the flock.

As, after the prayer, he stared fixedly at the forest, the others thought he would find some way out of their difficulty. The sun had set; high overhead, between the dark tops of the trees, its golden splendor still

lingered; then it turned crimson and gradually faded. The wind shifted to the south as twilight fell. Orlik seized his gun and strode toward the thicket. Night had already fallen when the people suddenly saw, in the distant darkness of the forest, something blazing like a great, golden star, or dawn, or the setting sun. With terrifying quickness it became larger and larger, and spread a blood-red glow all round it.

"The forest's on fire!" cried some one.

Swarms of birds rose on all sides out of its recesses, with loud cries and flutter of wings. In their pen the oxen bellowed, the dogs howled; and the men, terrified, ran about aimlessly, not knowing if the fire might not reach them, though the strong south wind warded off the flames and drove them in the contrary direction. Soon there lightened in the distance a second red star, then a third. Both mingled with the first,

and the flames spread over a great space. They streamed like a torrent, seized the dry stems of the lianas and the wild vines, scorching the green foliage. The wind scattered the burning leaves and carried them farther and farther, like fiery birds. Sounds arose like the roar of cannon when the giants of the forest burst in the flames, that glided like fiery serpents amidst the resinous undergrowth. The hissing, crackling, and rustling of the flames, mingled with the cries of the frightened birds and the bellowing of wild beasts, filled the air. Trees that reached the heavens tottered and swayed like pillars of fire; burning masses of lianas, torn loose from their supports, stretched out like Satanic arms, and carried sparks and fire from tree to tree. Redder and redder grew the heavens, as if a second conflagration raged above; and far around the sky was bright as day. Then the flames united to form a sea of fire; smoke,

glare, and the smell of burning filled the atmosphere.

The people in the settlement, although out of danger, cried and called to one another, as suddenly, from the direction of the fire where the sparks flew and the flames glowed, they saw Orlik appear. His face was dark with smoke and terribly disfigured. As they surrounded him, he leaned on his gun and cried: "Now you need grub no longer! I have set the forest on fire. In the morning you will have as many acres as you want." Then he drew near to Marysia and whispered: "Now you must be mine. I have set the forest on fire: who is mightier here than I?" The girl's whole body trembled, so terrible did he look as the crimson reflection of the flames lighted his black eyes. For the first time since she came, she thanked God that Yasko was not here, but in Lipinska.

XV.

AN INUNDATION.

The fire still raged for a while, then it moved farther and farther away. For days previously the sky had been cloudy and threatened rain. With the dawn some of the men went to the scene of the conflagration to look on at it; but it was impossible to draw very near because of the heat. The second day the mist was so thick that not a creature could see another three paces off. In the night it rained in torrents, probably in consequence of the fire, which might have disturbed the atmosphere and brought down the clouds; although at that season similar downpours are not uncommon on the Mississippi, as well as at the mouths of the Arkansas and Red Rivers. This result is not a little dependent on the evaporation

of the quantities of water which in Arkansas cover the entire country in the form of swamps, small lakes and rivers, and in spring are greatly augmented by the melting of the snow on the distant mountains.

In consequence of the rain, the whole meadow grew sodden, and gradually became transformed into a great pond. The constant damp, of course, caused the people to fall ill; and many more left the settlement for Clarksville, but soon returned with the news that the river had overflowed its banks, and to cross it was therefore impossible. The position of the settlers became momentarily more dreadful. A month had already passed since their arrival; their provisions were long since exhausted, and it was not in their power to fetch more from Clarksville. Lorenz and Marysia alone were in less danger of starvation than the others; for the powerful hand of Black Orlik protected them. Day after day he brought

them game which he had killed or trapped. Orlik had erected his tent on the wall of the log-hut where Lorenz lay, in order to protect him and Marysia from the rain. They had to take his help, which he almost forced on them, and were bound to him in gratitude; for payment he refused to accept anything, unless it were Marysia's hand.

"Am I the only one in the world?" she said, entreatingly. "Go find some other girl, for I love another man."

"If I went to the ends of the earth," responded Orlik, "I could not find a second like you. You are the only one in the world for me, and must be mine. What will become of you when your father dies? You'll come to me; you'll come of your own accord—or I will seize on you as the wolf on the lamb, and carry you off to the wood. But I won't eat you, my own darling! Who could set you against me?

Whom have I here to fear? If your Yasko would only come! I long for him."

Marysia shuddered.

As far as Lorenz was concerned, Orlik appeared to be right. The old man became gradually weaker, was often feverish, and raved about his sins, about Lipinska, and prayed that God might suffer him to see it again. Marysia shed bitter tears for him and for herself. The promise Orlik had made her, that if she would marry him he would go back with her to Lipinska, was more a grief than a comfort. To go back to Lipinska, where her Yasko was, and that with a stranger, and all for nothing! She would sooner die where she was, under the first tree she came to; then at least, she thought, it would all be at an end.

Meantime a fresh fatality had fallen on the settlement. The rain became more pitiless. One dark night, when Orlik as usual had gone to the woods, a cry of terror

arose in Tabor: "The floods are out,—the floods!" As the people rubbed their eyes they saw, despite the darkness, that as far as sight could reach there was visible only a white surface, pelted by the rain and ruffled by the wind. Steely gray shone the uncertain light on the waters, that curled and broke. From the bank where the tree trunks still stood, as well as from the partially burned forest, one heard the rushing and splashing of torrents streaming downward. Loud shrieks arose on all sides. Women and children fled to the wagons. The men ran as fast as they could to the west side of the meadow, where the trees had not yet been felled; and with the roar of the waters mingled cries of terror, names, and appeals for help.

Soon the larger cattle fled from one place to another before the inundation. The force of the water increased every moment. The sheep began to swim, with pitiful bleating,

as if calling for aid, until, drawn by the stream, they disappeared in the direction of the trees. The rain fell in bucketsful, and the terror increased minute by minute. The distant murmur changed to the loud, thundering dash of angry waves, and soon the wagons tottered before their onslaught. It was clear this was no ordinary rainfall, but that the Arkansas, with all its tributaries, had overflowed, was tearing up trees by the roots, and destroying whole districts. Terror, darkness, and death were spread on all sides by the unchained elements. Suddenly the wagon nearest the forest overturned. At the piercing cry for help uttered by the women in it, the dark forms of some men dropped from the trees; but the flood bore the would-be rescuers away with it, tossed them here and there, and carried them toward the forest to their destruction. In the remaining wagons the people climbed onto the roofs.

Heavier and heavier grew the rain, and thicker the darkness on the gloomy meadow. Now and then a plank floated by, to which a figure clung, tossed now here, now there; then the dark outline of an animal or a man, a hand appearing above the water only to sink immediately and forever. At last all were deafened by the roaring flood, even the piteous cries of "Jesus! Mary!" and the bellowing of the drowning animals. The wagons disappeared. Nothing but whirling water covered the plain. The wall of the log-hut whereon Lorenz lay under cover of Orlik's tent, rescued them at a stroke; for it floated like a raft. The flood carried it here and there, above the surface of the inundated meadow; drew it through the wood, dashing from tree to tree; threw it at last into the current of the river, and swept it out into the darkness.

Marysia knelt beside her aged father, raised her hands to heaven and cried to

God for aid; but only the splash of the rain on the storm-driven waves replied to her. Then the tent tore. The raft might break up now at any moment; for before and behind it were floating up-rooted trees, that might crush or overturn it. At last it caught between the branches of some tree, whose summit alone was visible above the water; but from this summit they heard a man's voice.

"Here, take the gun and move to the other side, that the raft may not upset; for I'm going to jump."

Scarcely had they done as they were told, when some one leaped from the branches onto the raft. It was Orlik.

"Marysia," he exclaimed, "as I told you, I have not abandoned you. By the God above us, I'll bring you safe out of this or die!"

With an axe which he had by him he cut a great branch from the tree, shaped it

roughly into an oar, and rowed away. As they were once more floating with the stream, they moved onward like lightning, whither they themselves knew not. From time to time Orlik pushed aside the floating branches and trunks, or urged his unwieldy craft adroitly past the still standing trees. His giant strength seemed to redouble. Despite the darkness, his eye caught every danger. Thus hour after hour passed. Any other man would have long since sunk exhausted, but the hunter seemed scarcely to feel fatigue. It was only toward morning that they passed from the neighborhood of the forest. Not another tree top was to be seen as far as the horizon, and the whole country looked like a heaving ocean. The foaming, yellow waters whirled in strange windings and with loud uproar over the dreary plain, now clearly visible in the light of dawn.

When Orlik saw no more trees, he drew

in his oar for a moment and turned to the young girl.

"Now you are mine, Marysia; for I have snatched you from death."

His head was bare, his face covered with perspiration, reddened and heated from fighting with the waves; but his expression was so proud, so confident, that for the first time Marysia did not dare to say to him that she had sworn fidelity to another.

"Marysia," he repeated softly; "beloved Marysia!"

"Where will this take us?" she asked, to turn the conversation.

"What do I care so long as you are with me?"

"Then row, so long as death may be before us"

And Orlik resumed his task.

XVI.

THE DEATH OF LORENZ.

Lorenz meantime grew worse and worse. Sometimes he was feverish, sometimes the fever left him; but he became gradually weaker. This weight of suffering was too much for his worn-out body. His end drew near, and with it came cessation of pain and a foretaste of eternal peace. Toward midday he awoke and whispered:

"Marysia, I won't live till tomorrow. My poor child! If I had only remained with you at Lipinska! But God is merciful; I have suffered much, and He will therefore pardon me my sins. Bury me as well as you can. Let Orlik bring you to New York to the old gentleman. He will have pity on you, and give you money to bring you back to Lipinska. I shall never more

return. O God, merciful God, let my soul at least fly there like a bird, just to see home once more!"

Here the fever seized him again, and he murmured weakly: "Holy Mother of God, to thy care I commend myself." Suddenly he cried out: "Don't throw me into the water! I'm not a dog." Perhaps he was then thinking of the night when in his misery he wished to cast Marysia into New York harbor; for he added: "Forgive me, dear child!—forgive me!"

The poor creature threw herself down beside him, sobbing. Orlik still rowed on, but sobs almost took away his breath.

Toward evening the heavens cleared. The sun hung in the west, above the inundated valley, and its beams mirrored themselves in the water like golden ribbons. The old man was at the point of death. God took pity on him, and granted him an easy passage. In the beginning he wailed

constantly: "Alas for me that ever I left Poland and came here!" And then, in his delirium, he thought that he was going back with Marysia, after having sold his lot, and received from the old gentleman in New York something to help him on his way. He saw it all before him like a vision, and lived through it.

The ship is bringing them once more across the ocean. They sail day and night, and again the sailors sing. Then they land at Hamburg, where they had gone on board. On the railway they rattle past all the towns, and hear German spoken everywhere. Onward flies the train. Soon Lorenz feels that home is drawing nearer. How different is the air that blows over his beloved fatherland! What is that? The frontier! His peasant heart thumps like a hammer. Forward! forward! My God, there they are—all the fields, with the old pear trees, and the cabins gray with years,

and the little churches! There is a peasant in a fur cap following the plough. Lorenz stretches out both hands toward him. "Praise God!" he tries to say, but he can not speak. And on they go. What is that over there? The town of Przyremble, and behind it lies Lipinska. With Marysia he makes his way there, and both weep for joy. It is spring; the rye is in bloom, and the insects hum in the air. In the town the bells ring in the Sunday morning. "My Jesus, how has a sinner merited such happiness!" murmured the old man. Now over the hill. Then come the cross and the sign-post, and the boundary of Lipinska. Now they seem to walk no longer: they fly as if they had wings. Already they are on the hill; they gain the cross and the sign-post. With a cry of joy the peasant throws himself on his knees and kisses the ground, and crawls to the cross and embraces it. He is back in Lipinska!

Yes, there he is; for only a stiffened corpse lies upon the raft floating over the wide-extending waters. His soul has fled whither peace and happiness beckoned it. In vain does Marysia lament over him: "Daddy! dear, dear daddy!" Poor child, he will never return to thee! He is better off—at home.

Night came. The oar dropped from Orlik's hand, so hungry was he. Marysia still knelt beside her father's corpse, and with broken words murmured her prayers. All around to the farthest boundaries of the horizon nothing but water was to be seen. They had, perhaps, drifted into the course of some stream; for the current again drew the raft quickly along, and it was impossible to guide it. Perhaps, on the other hand, it was only a whirlpool that circled over some cleavage of the plain; for but too often they were drawn in a circle. Orlik felt his strength deserting him, when

suddenly he cried with an oath: "By ——, there is a light!"

Marysia looked in the direction toward which he pointed; and there, in truth, glimmered in the distance something like a fire reflected in a ruddy strip on the water.

"That is a boat from Clarksville!" cried Orlik, hastily. "The Yankees have sent it to rescue us. If only they do not pass us by, Marysia dearest, I'll save you. Hoop! h-o-o-o-p!"

At the same time he rowed onward with the strength of love. The little fire became gradually larger before their eyes, and in its ruddy light was plainly visible the outline of a large boat. It was still far off, but it was coming nearer. After a time, however, they remarked that it no longer advanced toward them. They had drifted into the broad current in an opposite direction to its course. Suddenly the oar broke in Orlik's hand, and a second was not to be

found. The current drove them farther and farther, and the light grew fainter. Luckily, after a quarter of an hour the raft struck against a tree that stood alone on the plain, and it remained entangled in the branches.

"I will fire off the gun!" cried Black Orlik. "Then they will see the fire and hear the report."

He raised the barrel; but, instead of a report, they heard only the dull click of the cock on the pan: the powder was wet. Orlik threw himself full-length on the raft. He no longer knew what to do. For a time he lay there motionless; then he raised himself and spoke:

"Marysia, I would long ago have carried any other girl off to the woods, whether she liked it or not. I thought to do the same with you, but I did not dare—because I loved you. I went through the world like a wolf, feared by all men; but I, in my turn, was afraid of you. I will not force

you to love me; I'd sooner die. I will save you or perish; and if I perish, pity me at least a little, and say a prayer for me. And now, Marysia, farewell! Marysia, my only love, sun of my existence, farewell!"

And before she knew what he was about to do he had plunged into the water and struck out. For a time she still saw in the twilight his head and arms breasting the stream despite the strong current, for he was a powerful swimmer; but soon he disappeared from her sight.

He swam toward the boat to get aid for her; but the current too often hampered his movements and dragged him down, though by an effort he rose again and pressed forward. If he were able to escape this current, and gain another in a contrary direction, he would no doubt reach his goal; but, despite superhuman efforts, he advanced but slowly. The melancholy, yellow water dashed its foam into his eyes; at last he

raised his head, fetched a deep breath, and looked out into the darkness to see the boat with the light.

The flood gripped him with greater strength; now it cast him back, now drew him forward. His breath came laboringly, his knees stiffened. He thought: "I shall not reach it!" Then Marysia's beloved voice seemed to whisper in his ear: "Save me!" And once more he despairingly cut through the waves with his arms. His cheeks were swollen, his lips spluttered away the water, his eyes seemed starting from their sockets. If he turned back, he might still reach the raft by the help of the current; but he never once thought of such a thing, for the light of the steamer came nearer and nearer. In point of fact, the boat was being drawn toward him by the same current against which he struggled. Suddenly he felt his knees and feet seized with cramp; he still made some despairing

efforts. Nearer and nearer came the boat. He cried: "Help! help!" But the water smothered the last word. Then he sank. A wave passed over his head; he rose again to the surface. He saw the boat before him; he heard the splashing of its oars and the creaking of its planks. For the last time he forced a cry for aid. They heard him, too; for the rowing grew quicker. But he sank again, seized by a whirlpool. A moment later they saw something black in the water. First one hand and then the other was raised above the surface—then both disappeared.

Meantime Marysia wept alone on the raft by the corpse of her father, and gazed like one bereft of reason on the distant light, which the current gradually drew nearer to her. Soon she distinguished the outline of the boat and its oars, and she knew not whether to hope or to fear.

"Hello, Smith!" cried a voice in English.

"I'll be hanged, if I didn't hear a cry for help! Listen! There it is again!"

After a time strong arms drew Marysia into the boat, but Orlik was not there.

XVII.

MARYSIA'S RELEASE.

Two months later Marysia left the hospital at Little Rock, and journeyed to New York with the money kind friends had collected for her. The sum was not quite sufficient for her expenses, so part of the way would have to be done on foot; but as she had already learned a little English, she succeeded in begging the guards to take her for nothing. Many had compassion on this poor, delicate creature, who, despite her great eyes of heavenly blue, looked more like a shadow than a living being, and whose tears pleaded for pity; but what was a wild flower from Lipinska to do in this American whirlpool of business? How was she to help herself? Would not the first passing wagon knock her down and crush

her tender body, like any other flower over which it rolled?

Her thin hand, trembling with weakness, at last pulled the bell of a house in Water Street, New York, where Marysia sought help from the old gentleman, her countryman from Posen. A stranger opened the door.

"Is Mr. Zlotopolski at home?"

"Oh, he is dead long ago!"

"Dead? But his son, Master William?"

"He is away, travelling."

"And Miss Jenny?"

"Travelling likewise."

The door was closed upon her. She seated herself upon the step and rubbed her forehead. She was once more in New York, but quite alone, without help, without protection, without money. It was the will of God! Should she stay here? Not for the world. She would go to the harbor, to the German docks, and fall at the feet of

the captains there, and implore them to take her with them. They would pity her, and by begging her way through Germany she would get back to Lipinska. There she would find Yasko, besides whom she had no one in the wide world. If he would not have her, if he had forgotten her and rejected her, at least she would die near him.

She went to the harbor and threw herself at the feet of the German captains. They would take her with them, they said, if she would only get strong first, and become as pretty as she had been. They would be willing to do it now, but it was against the law, and they had nothing but trouble; therefore she had better leave them in peace.

Sadly she made her way to the bridge, to sleep where once she had slept, together with her father, on that memorable night when he wanted to throw her into the

water. She stilled her hunger with the scraps thrown up by the waves, as she had done before. Happily, now it was summer time and warm weather.

Daily, as soon as it was light, she went to the German docks and begged for pity; but always in vain. Despite her peasant toughness, she gradually lost strength. She knew only too well that if she did not go back to her native air, she would die like all with whom destiny had linked her.

One morning she dragged herself to the landing-place, calling forth all her strength; thinking that this was the last time, and that her forces would not last until evening. She had resolved to beg and pray no longer, but to slip on board the first ship bound for Europe, and hide in some corner. If they were once under way, and she was discovered, they would not throw her into the water; and if they did what of it? The *how* was a matter of no consequence, if die she

must. All the gangways to the vessels were, however, so closely watched that no one could pass in; and the watchmen drove her back at the first attempt.

She seated herself on a post by the water-side, and felt as if a burning fever were seizing on her. Smiling, she muttered to herself: "Now I am an heiress, Yasko; but I have kept true to you. Don't you know me?" Alas! this was no fever. Poor creature, her brain was turned!

Henceforward day after day she came to the harbor to look for her Yasko. The people grew accustomed to her, and often gave her a small alms. She thanked them modestly, and smiled like a child. This lasted about two months. One day she did not appear, and never more was she seen. Only the police notice announced some time later that just at the end of the harbor had been found the body of a girl, whose name and history were alike unknown. But the

reader knows the name, and the sad story of her who bore it; and will compassionate the woes of the poor for the sake of Marysia, the peasant maid of Lipinska.

A SELECT LIST OF AVE MARIA PUBLICATIONS.

A City of Confusion. By the Rev. Henry G. Ganss. 63pp., paper cover, . . 15 cts.

Mariolatry: New Phases of an Old Fallacy. By the Rev. Henry G. Ganss. 308 pp. 16mo. Cloth, 50 cts.; paper covers, . . 25 cts., *net.*

Fairy Gold. By Christian Reid. 357 pp. 12mo. Cloth, ... $1.

The Wonder-Worker of Padua. By Charles Warren Stoddard. 193 pp. 16mo. Cloth, 50 cts.

The Curé of Ars. By Kathleen O'Meara. 196 pp. 12mo. Cloth, gilt top, 75 cts.

Some Lies and Errors of History. By the Rev. Reuben Parsons, D. D. New and enlarged edition. 336 pp. 12mo. Cloth, . . $1.

The Success of Patrick Desmond. By Maurice Francis Egan. 418 pp. 12mo. Cloth, $1.25

Mary Queen of May, and Other Essays. By Brother Azarias. 83 pp. 16mo. Cloth, gilt top, 30 cts. *net.*

A Sin and Its Atonement. 106 pp. 16mo. Cloth. Tastefully bound, . . 30 cts.

Two Paths, and Other Stories and Sketches. By Louisa May Dalton. 194 pp. 16mo. Cloth extra, ... 50 cts.

The Disappearance of John Longworthy. By Maurice F. Egan. 306 pp. 16mo. Cloth, 75 cts.

Christian Art in Our Own Age. By Eliza Allen Starr. 68 pp. 12mo. Leatherette, gilt, 30 cts.

A Short Cut to the True Church. By the Rev. Edmund Hill, C. P. 175 pp. 16mo. Cloth extra, 50 cts.; paper covers, . . . 25 cts. *net.*

The Knight of Bloemendale, and Other Stories, Tales and Legends. 279 pp. 16mo. Cloth, 75 cts.

Carmela. By Christian Reid. 371 pp. 12mo. Cloth, $1.

A Troubled Heart and How It was Comforted at Last. 16mo. Cloth, gilt, 75 cts.

Glimpses of the Supernatural. In fancy cloth, bright colors, gilt stamp. 295 pp. 16mo, 75 cts.

Philip's Restitution. By Christian Reid. 313 pp. 12mo. Cloth, $1.

A Child of Mary. By Christian Reid. 352 pp. 12mo. Cloth, $1.

Francis Macary, the Cabinet-Maker of Lavaur. By Henry Lasserre, 10 cts.

The Lepers of Molokai. By Charles Warren Stoddard. 85 pp. Embossed paper, 10 cts.

His Victory. By Christian Reid. 10 cts.

The Mad Penitent of Todi. By Anna Hanson Dorsey. 10 cts.

Masses for the Dead, and Motives for Having Them Celebrated. A work of deep interest. By the Rev. A. A. Lambing, LL. D. 126 pp., 25 cts.

Mixed Marriages; Their Origin and Their Results. By the Rev. A. A. Lambing, LL. D. A most important publication. 63 pp., 15 cts.

Record of a Suffering Soul. By Rose Howe. An exceedingly interesting and beautifully written sketch. Neat pamphlet form. 58 pp., 15 cts.

A Feast of the Holy Rosary at the Tomb of St. Dominic. By Rose Howe. 131 pp. 16mo. Boards, 25 cts. *net.*

"Apples Ripe and Rosy, Sir;" and Other Stories for Boys and Girls. By Mary Catherine Crowley. 256 pp. 16mo. Cloth extra, . . 75 cts.

Iet, the War Mule; and Other Stories for Boys and Girls. By E. L. Dorsey. 307 pp. 16mo. Cloth extra, ... $1.

Midshipman Bob. By E. L. Dorsey. 265 pp. 16mo. Tastefully bound, . . 75 cts.

Tales for Eventide. A collection of Stories for Young Folk. 248 pp. 18mo. Cloth, ink and gold, 60 cts.

Once Upon a Time. A collection of Stories and Legends. 297 pp. 16mo. Elegantly bound, 75 cts.

Behold Thy Mother; or, Motives of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin. From the German of the Rev. P. Roh, S. J. An able and eloquent exposition of devotion to Our Lady. 26 pp., . 10 cts.

The Catholic Church and Modern Science. By the Very Rev. Dr. J. A. Zahm, C. S. C. . 10 cts.

Better than Gold. By Nugent Robinson. 10 cts.

Two Celebrated Sanctuaries of the Madonna in Italy. (Loreto and Genazzano.) . . 10 cts.

☞ *Any of the above publications will be sent free of postage on receipt of price. Several copies of any book at reduced rates. Lists of Plays for male characters, and of little dramas for young folk, furnished on application. Sample copies of* The Ave Maria *sent free to any part of the world. Address:*

THE AVE MARIA,

St. Joseph's Co., Notre Dame, Ind.

3 5282 00247 3695

Date Due

Sienkiewicz, Henryk FICTION

Peasants in exile.

41032

FICTION FICTION c. 41032
Sienkiewicz, Henryk,
Peasants in exile
3 5282 00247 3695